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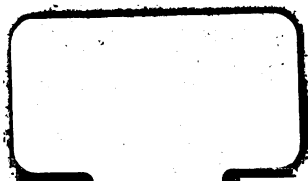
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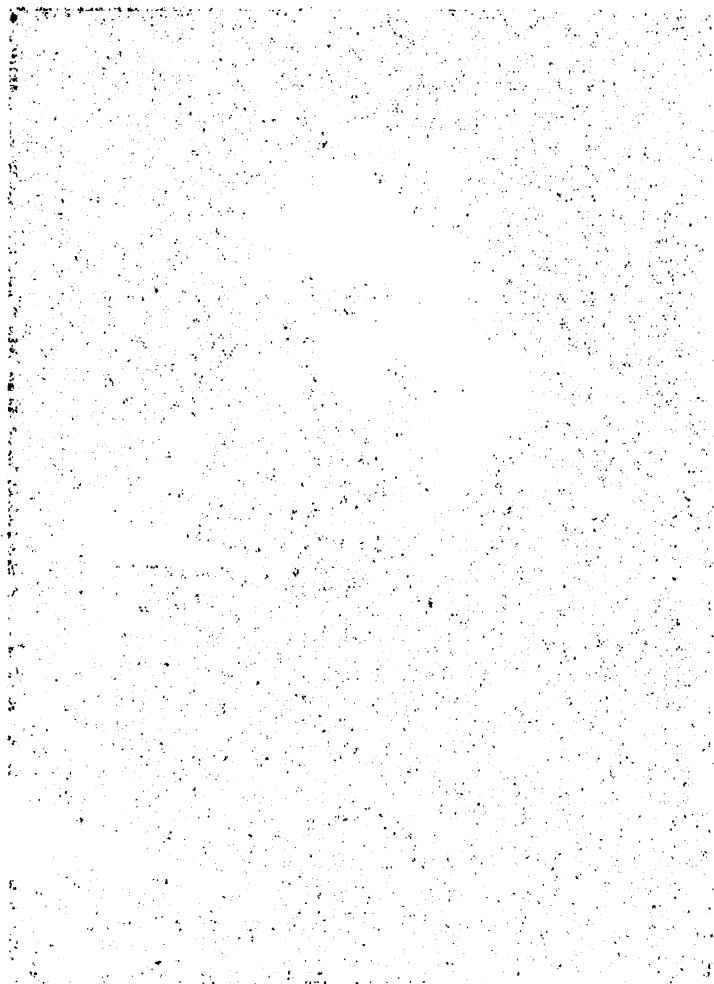


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STUDY

EXAMPLES
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ELOQUENCE

COUNSEL ON
THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES
SHOWING THE STYLE AND METHOD
OF FAMOUS ORATORS

BY
GARRETT P. SERVISS

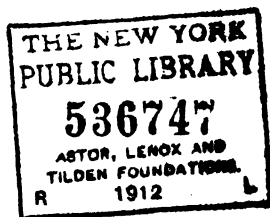
AUTHOR OF—
"ASTRONOMY WITH THE NAKED EYE"
"CURIOSITIES OF THE SKY" ETC.

"All men are competitors in this art"
—EMERSON



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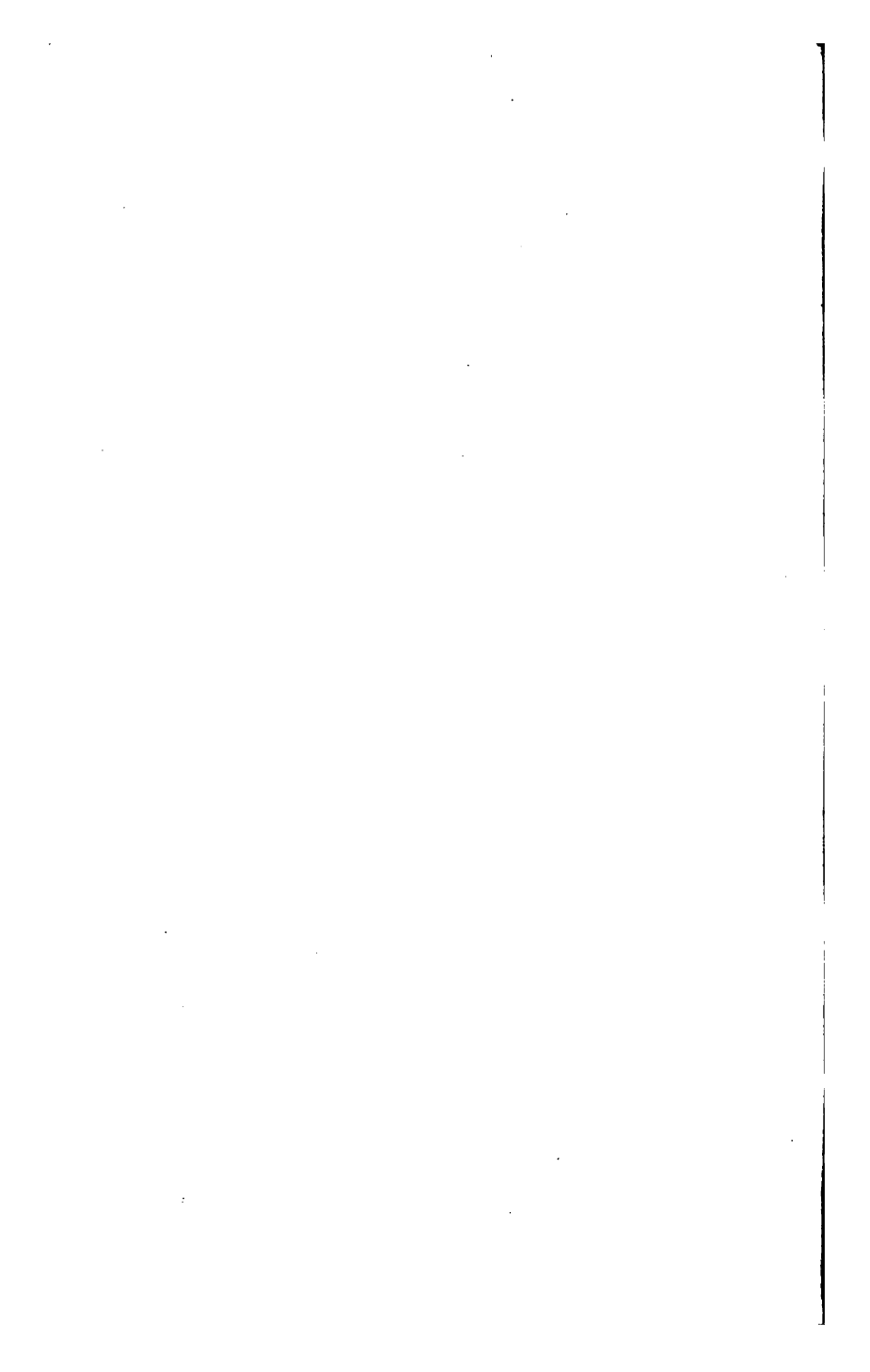
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PREFACE

THIS book is the result of many years of personal experience, in a modest way, on the lecture platform and in addresses to occasional audiences, as well as of long study of the art of oratory as taught by the precepts and example of others. The author believes that he has learned at first hand some things which may be of interest to those who would practise this art; and he has set down the fruits of his observations and reflections without regard to their agreement or disagreement with what others have said on the same subject. In some respects his conclusions differ from those which seem to be generally entertained, but, such as they are, they are based upon knowledge gained by experience.

Since he wishes to make his work useful to those who are beginning their career, he has thought it advisable to introduce a considerable number of illustrative examples, not only in the body of the book, but in a supplementary part at the end. It is believed that these typical specimens of eloquence will not only interest the general reader, who may not be able readily to put his hands upon some of the originals, but, with the explanatory remarks and comments that accompany them, will prove useful to the student who wishes to form his style.

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I

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IT has become a fashion with some newspaper writers to sneer at oratory and orators; and opprobrious epithets, such as "spell-binding," are not spared by them. If the suggestion did not seem, on its face absurd, one might suspect jealousy, or pique, over the influence wielded by the platform and the pulpit as the moving cause of these strictures, aimed against the whole tribe of public speakers. But, while the sense of hearing exists, and so long as language remains true to its philological origin (*lingua*, "the tongue"), it is by the spoken word that men and women will be most deeply and frequently moved. The music of speech is extinguished on the written or printed page, or, if the imagination hears it there, it can only be through recollection of the charm, force, and significance of the vocal sounds for which the inked characters stand.

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¶ Eloquence is the sister of poetry, and this is not the less true when the term eloquence is limited to spoken discourse; for, in the beginning, both eloquence and poetry were equally spontaneous in utterance, the first poets being rhapsodists. Poetry, to its great advantage, long ago became a slave of the pen; but eloquence, by its very nature, remains free. Still, the two have never lost the indicia of their original kinship.

The old saying that the poet is born and the orator made is one of those time-honored epigrams that will not bear close examination. Genius, talent, special aptitude, circumstances play as large a part in the one case as in the other. The great orator is as truly a product of genius as the great poet, and neither can be *made* by any amount of practice. It would be as impossible for a training-school to create a Demosthenes as a Homer.

¶ But where there is merely talent without genius it is undoubtedly true that practice produces more striking results in oratory than in poetry. This arises from the fact that the orator's field is vastly wider than the poet's. In the course of a generation the world sees few great poems produced, and perhaps the product, small though it be, is as abundant as humanity requires. Poetry is the high light of the mental landscape—a vivid gleam here and there is all that nature admits. But in a generation there must be a great number of orations, demanded by

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the necessity which mankind is constantly under of having its thought and feeling awakened and guided, and its inmost convictions expressed in a more tangible form than the majority of men are capable of giving to them. In consequence of this incessant demand, public speaking which does not rise to the level of oratorical genius is both acceptable and useful, while the mediocre poem would better not have been written, since it answers no pressing need.

Many apparently think that the printing-press supplies nearly all that the public needs in the way of stimulus and guidance, but in fact the press never has done, and never will do, that. The living word is as indispensable and as potent to-day as it was before newspapers and magazines were invented, and before books began to be poured forth in millions. All these are crystallized products, purified in the process to a certain extent no doubt, but nevertheless lacking something of the original quintessence. Accordingly, it is for the general good that even the simplest talent for public speaking should be encouraged, cultivated, and directed. Such talent sometimes exists undetected, or unsuspected, by its possessor, owing to lack of opportunity for exercise or to natural timidity. An unsought occasion may bring it to light. Strong emotion is certain to do so, and may even create, temporarily, the power. John Randolph, when asked by some acquaintances of the bar what

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was the most eloquent plea he had ever listened to, replied: "It was at the auction block; a negro woman imploring mercy for her children."

/ Oratory is, in one sense, conversation magnified, and addressed to a crowd of hearers instead of to one or a few. It was often said of Wendell Phillips that, in his quieter addresses, which were not the least effective, he reminded the hearer of a gentleman talking to his friends. "The keynote to the oratory of Wendell Phillips," says Mr. Higginson, "lay in this: that it was essentially conversational—the conversational raised to its highest power. Perhaps no orator ever spoke with so little apparent effort or began so entirely on the plane of his average hearers. It was as if he simply repeated, in a little louder tone, what he had been saying to some familiar friend at his elbow. Then, as the argument went on, the voice grew deeper, the action more animated, and the sentences came in a long, sonorous swell still easy and graceful, but powerful as the soft stretching of a tiger's paw."

/ One often hears the expression used, with regard to a speaker who talks in a conversational tone, without declamation, that he is "no orator." In truth, such a speaker is frequently the most effective of orators, exhibiting the art of public speaking in its finest development. But here everything depends upon temperament. Phillips, with aristocratic ease, packed quietly spoken

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sentences full of silent lightning; Webster shook his audiences with rhetorical thunder—but there was lightning in it, too; Everett displayed every grace of elocution, and filled his hearers with admiration for his technique, if not with conviction for his cause; Lincoln “only spoke right on,” the speech as faulty as the man, but every sentence telling like a heart-blow.

✓ The art of public speaking and that of private talk not only overlap, but they often involve the same methods. Watch a person who is trying to persuade or convince or simply to entertain, a companion, or a circle of companions, at a table, or in a parlor, or an office, and you will perceive that what he says is really cast in the oratorical mold, though on a reduced scale. The play of features, the glances, the intonations are essentially the same, though generally more quiet and less intense. But let the conversation become animated, let the speaker’s feelings be aroused, and instantly his voice rises and deepens, his tones grow more earnest, and his gestures more emphatic, until his talk becomes a brief oration. He is eloquent, witty, sarcastic, indignant, argumentative; he stirs the emotions of his hearers—all of which is precisely what the orator is and does upon a broader stage before a larger audience.

Still—and the example of Mr. Phillips does not contradict the assertion—it is only superficially that a conversation, however animated,

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resembles a public speech. And, what is particularly important for our present purpose, talent for conversation does not imply talent for public speaking. Men who have possessed a genius for oratory have not often been great talkers in private; and conversely great conversationalists have rarely made great speeches. Dr. Samuel Johnson is the typical representative of the art of intellectual conversation, and many of his sayings might be cited as admirable examples of laconic oratory; yet Dr. Johnson never made public addresses, and was, no doubt, constitutionally incapable of doing so. The brilliant conversationalists of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, who are credited with having laid the foundations of modern polite society, did not shine on the platform. In truth, the general incapacity of men and women who can delight, convince, and entertain a company of friends in close converse, to speak well when on their feet and face to face with a large audience is a curious phenomenon. Why do they, almost invariably, become tongue-tied in such circumstances, and why do their minds cloud over, their memories escape, and their thoughts go wool-gathering as soon as they are confronted by an extensive assemblage disposed to listen to them?

Many reasons might be found to explain the anomaly. First, the inability may arise from a kind of adult bashfulness, a shrinking from the

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psychologic force of a miscellaneous crowd of human beings concentrating their attention, from many different points, upon a single representative of their species who stands in the attitude of a challenger—for every public speaker throws down his gage when he steps upon the platform.

He undertakes to maintain his position for an hour, or a longer time, against hostile opinion; or skeptical questioning (which will be felt, if it exists, though not openly voiced); or censorious criticism, leaving no crevice in his armor untouched, whether it be found in his manner, his language, his voice, his figure, or even his clothes; or, worst of all, perhaps blank indifference. If there is such a thing as telepathy, its invisible lightnings play between a speaker and his audience, and at the start it is the former who receives most of the discharges; and unless he possesses the advantage of great prestige or has commanding talents which immediately manifest themselves, he runs the risk of a paralysis of his mental powers at the first encounter. Even the most experienced and renowned orators always find their chief difficulty at the very beginning. /

Next, the conversationalist finds a whip and spur for his mind in the immediate contiguity of familiar hearers, which fails him when he stands formally upon a platform. In the ease of his home circle the imminence of friendly interruption, or even direct opposition, does not dis-

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turb him; on the contrary, every contradiction serves to furnish him with a new idea, a new point of view, or a fresh impulse, of which, with perfectly untroubled mind, he immediately avails himself. But it cannot be thus in a public speech, where the interruptions, if there be any, are usually unsympathetic, and where a free interchange of suggestion, repartee, question and answer, is generally impracticable. The orator has his line laid out, and his address would be reduced to chaos if he heeded every straying current of suggestion coming to him from a myriad of minds.

Third, and this is but an extension of what has just been said, the conversationalist is habitually among personal acquaintances, whom he usually knows intimately, as they know him, and of whom he has no lurking fear, since he has already many times gauged their abilities and tastes. He feels himself quite at home, and is troubled with no false shame and no failing confidence in the presence of so many familiar faces. But even one's friends appear in a different aspect when they are assembled in the form of an audience instead of that of a social circle. They no longer look like the same persons, and there is something formidable in their expectant silence. The accustomed bonds of sympathy are broken, and the well-known lineaments shape themselves into the stoical faces of judges whose verdict is to be won by un-

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familiar means. The importance to the conversationalist of the element of familiarity is demonstrated when, as often happens, a famous talker scores a failure on being introduced into a strange company.

Finally, it would seem that the ability to talk well in a small company commonly goes with a habit of rapid, fragmentary thinking. There is no plan, and no subject is pursued long or traced through all its complexities. Of course, the brilliant conversationalist may conduct his everyday business with all the requisite continuity, concentration, and attention to details; but in his hours of relaxation, among his intimates, his mind goes by leaps, passing quickly from one idea to another, seizing a few salient points, but not driving far afield in any direction or discussing a subject comprehensively. This is manifestly totally inconsistent with the method that must be pursued by the public speaker. He must keep on talking, holding the attention of his hearers unbroken for long periods of time and never losing the thread of his discourse. He must develop his subject systematically, on broad lines, but with a clear mastery of its principal details. He can count on no resources outside himself; and his own memory, logical power, and imagination must be the all-sufficient sources upon which he can continue indefinitely to draw. Not only must his knowledge be wide and deep, but he must possess a moral courage that is

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proof against sudden panic. Even if it is only an after-dinner speech that he has to make, his attitude to the audience and that of the audience to him are totally different from the relations between the talker and the listeners in a social circle.

/ A positively inimical disposition on the part of the hearers will, ordinarily, at once break up a conversation, but frequently it has just the contrary effect in the case of a public speech. The true orator sometimes finds his best account in unsympathetic interruptions, or in a spirit of boisterous opposition, on the part of his audience. This arises from the fact that the chief business of the orator is to persuade and convince, and not merely to entertain. The history of oratory is full of the most dramatic instances of the power of the speaker to conquer opposition and to reverse the current of feeling, or of opinion, in an audience. The real strength of Henry Ward Beecher was never so fully exhibited as when he successfully answered a mob of secession sympathizers at Liverpool during our Civil War. When Wendell Phillips met with open opposition and interruption, he rose to his highest level and became doubly eloquent and irresistibly persuasive.

A striking example of this peculiar power of the born orator is afforded by Major Pond's account of what happened when he took Mr. Beecher to Richmond not long after the close of

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the war. The mayor of Richmond telegraphed to Major Pond that Mr. Beecher must not come there, because, on account of his anti-slavery record, he would be in danger of personal violence. Mr. Beecher read the despatch, smiled, and said that he would go to Richmond and fulfil his contract. He went, and a packed house, composed exclusively of men, was ready for him. They intended to drive him from the platform. Those who were in the secret were either filled with anxiety or piqued by curiosity over the result. As the great orator, whom most of those that he faced regarded as a bitter enemy of their cherished ideals, stepped to the front the hostile house rose against him with hisses, cat-calls, and threatening cries. Some hot-heads menaced him with violence. Mr. Beecher kept his temper and held his ground, waiting, good-naturedly, for an opportunity to be heard. When it came he surprised his interrupters by paying no attention to their insults, instead of answering which he raised an uncontrollable laugh by a happy hit at the legislature, which, being then in session, had sent a large contingent to the hall. From laughing many of the disturbers, taken unawares, passed to cheering, and the most boisterous quieted down, curious to hear what it was which so amused and interested the front ranks. Then the genius of the born orator began to shine—and no audiences are more responsive to such things than those of Southern birth and blood. In a

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little while any one who attempted an interruption would have been driven from the hall. The listeners found themselves hanging upon the speaker's lips, and soon they were all swept away by the tide of his eloquence. Forgetting what they had come for, forgetting that he who addressed them had ever been their enemy, hearing from him only sentiments of common brotherhood, they gave him their full sympathy, and greeted his glowing periods with round upon round of enthusiastic applause. When he left the hall an admiring throng escorted him to his hotel, and the next morning a delegation of the leading citizens of Richmond, headed by the mayor, waited upon him, and asked him to remain another night and speak again, for, they said, they wanted their wives and daughters to hear him.

Few such moments of triumph as that come to any man. Mr. Beecher had not won his victory as the general does, with the aid of others—it was all his own, personal in the strictest sense. It is this which fills the heart of the successful orator with an elation unparalleled, perhaps, among the impulses of human vanity.

Although the ability of the orator to bear down opposition and to derive inspiration from the clash of opposing sentiment is, in some ways, akin to that of the conversationalist who finds a stimulus in the cross-play of questions, suggestions, and interruptions from his little circle of

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listeners; yet it rests upon a broader basis. It is the result of mastery over his subject, which, in turn, comes from the habit of continuous thinking, in contrast with the haphazard mental processes of the mere talker.

Opposition, instead of throwing the speaker's thoughts into a new channel, rather serves to concentrate them and to give them more dynamic force. It calls forth his energies, awakens his combativeness, and summons his reserves into action. Such occasions furnish an excellent test to determine whether a man possesses the instinct of the orator. They will show whether he answers to Charles James Fox's definition: "An orator is one who can give immediate, instantaneous utterance to his thoughts." Of course this definition presupposes something, as, for instance, that the person who can thus instantly put his thoughts into words possesses at the same time the mental aplomb and steady self-control required to face a great throng of strange faces. The sentences of the ready converser also shape themselves simultaneously with his thoughts; but it does not follow that he can make a formal address. There is no doubt that some are born with the instinct to expand their minds in the presence of a multitude of their fellow-beings, but the majority are not. To the former a crowd is an inspiration; to the latter it is an unmanning terror. /

We have referred to the relationship of poetry

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and eloquence; let us now examine this a little more closely. At the bottom the instinct which produces a poem and that which produces an oration is nearly the same thing. Both find their root in emotion. Neither a great poem nor a great speech was ever built upon a purely intellectual foundation; and, in general, the effectiveness of either depends upon the character and force of the emotion which breathes through it. In the case of a poem no one would think of denying this, but it may not be obvious that the same is always true of the oration.

The charge of a judge from the bench, for instance, seems to be a purely intellectual performance, which should not be regarded as partaking of the nature of oratory. But in more cases than is generally supposed, and indeed in the majority of cases where the cause is of great celebrity or deep interest, the judge becomes virtually an advocate—of his own views, if nothing else—and then what he says is cast in the oratorical form, emotion inevitably entering into it to a degree depending upon the circumstances. A judge is sometimes an orator in pronouncing sentence, because he feels that he is not merely addressing the criminal before him, but is laying down principles of human action important to all men. Without departing from his judicial functions he may thrill the hearts of his hearers, awaken their consciences, and even move them to tears.

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From time "whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary" it has been recognized that the successful advocate must have the instinct of the orator. Every great law firm, even though it never takes a criminal case, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, has its "jury" man, one who possesses the ability to give instantaneous and effective expression to his thoughts. He "sums up" the cases that his office colleagues have laboriously prepared. The necessity of this function was so well understood in Athens that there were schools of rhetoric intended to teach men to present their own causes, as well as those of others, before their judges.

Mr. Wellman, in his book on *The Art of Cross-Examination*, quotes, with approval, this dictum of a celebrated English barrister:

"The issue of a cause rarely depends upon a speech, and is seldom even affected by it. But there is never a cause contested the result of which is not mainly dependent upon the skill with which the advocate conducts his cross-examination."

This is, no doubt, largely true, but everybody familiar with the doings of courts must perceive that the statement is too sweeping. The average jurymen cannot be depended upon to understand the force of all the subtle points brought out by cross-examination, and even a bench of judges will welcome a clear summing-up of a case by an able speaker. The purpose

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of the closing address is to digest and organize the substance of the testimony and to present it in such a way as to make all its points tell.

The jury lawyer is a man talking to men, and he knows instinctively on what side they can best be approached. In his addresses the emotional element, though it may be concealed, plays as great a part as the logic in producing the desired result. If a man practises self-analysis he will be surprised to find how frequently his decisions and actions are determined by feeling, even when he tries to persuade himself that nothing but cold reason affects them. Judges on the bench are not exempt from the influence of eloquence. Consider what Justice Story said of Webster's celebrated address before the Supreme Court of the United States in the Dartmouth College case, when bench and bar alike were moved to tears: "For the first hour we listened to him with perfect astonishment, for the second hour with perfect delight, and for the third hour with perfect conviction."

It was in this address that the great orator made an almost matchless appeal, whose story constitutes one of the most treasured pages in the history of American eloquence. He had finished his legal argument, and he stood for some moments silent, while a hush rested upon the court-room. At length, addressing Chief-Justice Marshall, he said:

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"This, sir, is my case. It is the case not merely of that humble institution; it is the case of every college in our land. It is more; it is the case of every eleemosynary institution throughout our country—of all those great charities founded by the piety of our ancestors to alleviate human misery and scatter blessings along the pathway of life. Sir, you may destroy this little institution—it is weak, it is in your hands. I know it is one of the lesser lights in the literary horizon of our country. You may put it out. But if you do you must *carry through your work*; you must extinguish, one after another, all those great lights of science which, for more than a century, have thrown their radiance over our land!

"It is, sir, as I have said, a small college, and yet—there are those who love it!" [Every auditor knew that it was Webster's own alma mater.]

Then recovering his self-control, he turned to the opposing counsel, one at least of whom, says Mr. Wirt, was also a graduate of Dartmouth, and exclaimed:

"Sir, I know not how others may feel, but as for myself when I see my alma mater surrounded, like Cæsar in the senate house, by those who are reiterating stab after stab, I would not for this right hand have her turn to me and say, 'And thou, too, my son!'"

This cannot be challenged on the ground that it is mere rhetoric, for every reader perceives that it was the only effective way in which Webster could present the thought that was in

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his mind, a thought too charged with emotion for logical exposition, but none the less pertinent and appropriate. It is in such passages that every orator proclaims his kinship with the poet. No forensic speaker in recent times has excelled Robert G. Ingersoll, and one could not listen to an address by Ingersoll without feeling that the force behind it was essentially the soul of a poet.

It will hardly be denied that pulpit eloquence is exclusively emotional. "Feeling is deeper than thought," and all religion is based upon it. The power of the Bible is in its mingling of poetic and oratorical forms, and no great preacher ever drew his inspiration from any other source. In proportion as his soul catches fire from the simple fervor of the New Testament narratives, or from the glowing ardor of the Hebrew prophets, the pulpit orator moves his hearers.

Take as an example of pulpit eloquence, which is almost Scriptural in the simplicity of its phrases, the sublimity of its imagery, and the fearlessness of its denunciation, the opening of Jacques Brydane's sermon in the church of St. Sulpice, Paris, whither he went by invitation after having achieved a great reputation in the provinces, and where, for the first time, he faced an audience of dignitaries and people of rank and fashion:

"Until now I have proclaimed the righteousness of the Most High in churches covered with thatch. I

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have preached the rigors of penance to unfortunates who wanted bread! I have declared to single-hearted peasants the most awful truths of my religion. Unhappy man, what have I done? I have made sad the poor, the best friends of my God! I have conveyed terror and grief into those simple and honest souls whom I ought to have pitied and consoled! It is here only—where I behold the great, the rich, the oppressors of suffering humanity, and where I see daring and hardened sinners—it is here only that the sacred word should be made to resound with all the force of its thunder, and where I should place with me in this pulpit, on the one side, Death, which threatens you, and, on the other, God, who is about to judge you! I hold to-day your sentence in my hand. Tremble, then, in my presence, you proud and disdainful men who hear me! The necessity of salvation; the certainty of death; the uncertainty of that hour, so terrifying to you; final impenitence; the Last Judgment; the number of the elect; and, above all, Eternity! These are the subjects upon which I have come to discourse, and which I ought, doubtless, to have reserved for you alone.”

Manifestly, this kind of preaching would miss its aim to-day, but it is equally manifest that in its time (the eighteenth century) it was admirably suited to both the place and the auditory. The instinct of the orator must teach him how to fit his style to the time and the occasion.

The second great quality of both the poet and the orator is imagination. But imagination

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itself is largely based upon emotion, for its pictures are formed of sense experiences transcendentalized. In the many forms of oratory which are neither forensic nor religious imagination furnishes the motive force. Napoleon's addresses to his armies were wonderful examples of terse oratory, transfused with imagination.

"Soldiers, forty centuries are watching you from the summits of yonder pyramids!"

No speaker ever pronounced a more effective oratorical sentence than that.

"Soldiers, in fifteen days you have gained six victories, taken twenty-one stands of colors, fifty pieces of cannon, fifteen hundred prisoners. Destitute of everything, you have supplied yourselves with everything. You have won battles without cannon, crossed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without shoes, bivouacked without spirituous liquors and often without bread. But you have still battles to fight, cities to take, rivers to pass. Is there one whose courage fails? No, not among the victors of Montenotte, of Millesimo, of Diego, of Mondovi!"

These sentences stir the blood more than a hundred years after they were pronounced. When he was about to land in Egypt he evoked a dream of military glory by a single phrase:

"Soldiers, the first city that you are to enter was founded by Alexander the Great!"

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On his return from Egypt he said to the Directory:

"What have you done with that brilliant France which I left you? I left you at peace, and I find you at war. I left you victorious, and I find you defeated. I left you the millions of Italy, and I find only spoliation and poverty. What have you done with *the hundred thousand Frenchmen*, my companions in glory? They are dead! . . . This state of affairs cannot last long; in less than three years it would plunge us into despotism."

It may be a new thought to many readers that Napoleon was potentially an orator, but history proves it, and he has furnished models of eloquence that any one may study with advantage. He had the instinct. And so had Cæsar and Alexander.

Even the scientific lecturer is effective, with a miscellaneous audience, only in proportion as his addresses contain what is called the "human" element, which is simply eloquence based upon emotive imagination. John Tyndall could be eloquent upon a glacier; Michael Faraday about a tallow candle; Louis Agassiz on the structure of a fish; Professor Doremus concerning a chemical experiment; Charles Frederic Hartt on geology. Perhaps the subject which best lends itself to eloquent exposition is astronomy, because it more than any other appeals to the imagination. The astronomical lecturer who

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fails to uplift the minds of his auditors into a sphere beyond common life would better keep his seat. Even mathematics—that intellectual horror, as many regard it—is packed full of poetry and capable of inspiring real eloquence. One of the greatest of English mathematicians and astronomers, Sir George Airy, after producing an account of gravitation in popular language, recorded that the putting of deep mathematical principles out of the algebraic into the graphic or sensational form not only disclosed to him new beauties in the propositions, but also clarified his own understanding of them.

The fact that the strength of oratory lies mainly, like that of poetry, in its emotive and imaginative power is so evident that it seems unnecessary to dwell upon it; and yet one cannot help recalling instances in illustration. A celebrated example is given by Macaulay in his account of the impeachment of Warren Hastings by Edmund Burke. Here was a case in which it might well have been thought that clear, logical reasoning, based upon a plain statement of facts, was the only proper line for the speaker to follow; but hear what Macaulay says:

“The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of admiration even from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays

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of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were handed round, hysterical sobs and screams were heard, and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length, the orator concluded. Raising his voice until the old arches of Irish oak resounded: 'Therefore,' said he, 'hath it, with all confidence, been ordered by the Commons of Great Britain that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the Commons House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honor he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, and in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all!'"

Take another oratorical gem, of a different quality and finish, but brought into existence by the same great occasion, the uprising of public opinion in England against the enormities of English rule in India. This is from Richard Brinsley Sheridan's speech against Hastings, which, in the opinion of many contemporaries, surpassed even Burke's great effort, and which Fox averred was the greatest oration that had been delivered within the memory of man.

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“Had a stranger at this time gone into the province of Oude, ignorant of what had happened since the death of Sujah Dowla, ignorant of all that had occurred in that short interval, and observing the wide and general devastation, and all the horrors of the scene—plains unclothed and brown, vegetables burned up and extinguished, villages depopulated and in ruins, temples unroofed and perishing, reservoirs broken down and dry—he would naturally have inquired: ‘What war has thus laid waste the fertile fields of this once beautiful and opulent country; what civil dissensions have happened thus to tear asunder and separate the happy societies that once possessed these villages; what disputed succession, what religious rage, has, with unholy violence, demolished these temples and disturbed the fervent but unobtruding piety of their worshipers; what merciless enemy has spread the horrors of fire and sword; what visitation of Providence has dried up the fountains and taken from the face of the earth every vestige of verdure? Or rather, what monsters have stalked over the country, tainting and poisoning, with pestiferous breath, what the voracious appetite could not devour?’ To such questions what must be the answer? ‘No wars have ravaged these lands and depopulated these villages; no civil discords have been felt; no disputed succession; no religious rage; no merciless enemy; no affliction of Providence; no voracious and poisoning monsters—no, all this has been accomplished by the friendship, generosity, and kindness of the English nation. They have embraced us with their protecting arms, and lo! these are the fruits of the alliance!’”

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The slightest analysis shows at once the wide divergence in style between these two specimens of eloquence, called forth by a single cause, but exhibits, at the same time, the prevalence in each of them of imagination exalted by emotion. They are rhapsodies in prose, yet based upon a strictly logical foundation. They emphasize the generic connection of oratory and poetry.

But, in order to make our meaning still clearer, let us take an example from the other side. I choose so apparently unpromising an instance as Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard." In reading the finest stanza of that poem one cannot but feel that it must have been written under an impulse, with a flush of feeling closely resembling what comes to the orator in the full tide of his eloquence:

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth, e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

That thought and those words were not laboriously worked up; they came flocking on free wings. You can see that it must have been so by the sweep of the lines. One does not write thus in cold blood. (I shall deal with the author's emendations later.) The motive of the outburst is displayed in the immediately preceding stanzas, which irresistibly lead the sensitive mind to expect an emotional explosion. One

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can perceive it coming, just as in listening to an impassioned speaker one can see, or rather feel, the steps by which the orator is climbing to some far-viewing point, from which he will launch himself, like an eagle springing from its cliff, and depending only on the deep circumambient air for support. If the eagle stopped to consider the proper way to manage its wings it could not fly as it does; and it could not fly as perfectly as it does if flying were for it a series of concerted and conscious movements, worked out in advance and carefully committed to memory. The flight is performed by instinct, implanted in the bird's inmost nature. And just so the true orator speaks, and so the great poet writes, at least for his first draft. But we shall come afterward to the subject of the unconscious birth of thought, and the flocking of unsummoned words to express it. At present let us complete our analysis.

We have remarked that the essentially oratorical origin of the stanza above quoted can be traced in the preceding part of the poem, and this is worth examining for its bearing upon the art of the speaker. In the opening stanzas the scene is laid, and the humble labors and innocent pleasures of "the rude forefathers of the hamlet" are pictured. Inspired by what has gone before, the poet's thought now begins to be shot with emotion, of which there has been little hitherto. A keen sense of the injustice as well as of the

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vanity of human pride awakens in his mind and warms his lines. Then comes, by quick transition from a depiction of plowed fields and morn-ind woodlands echoing to the ax, the indignant expostulation:

“Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure,
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.”

Here one can feel the passion rising in the poet's soul, and forecasting the climax, which bursts forth at once:

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,”

(A thoroughly oratorical phrase.)

“And all that beauty, all that wealth, e'er gave,”

(One cannot read that line without the intonation of the speaker.)

“Await alike th' inevitable hour:”

(Here a characteristically oratorical pause, followed by the meteoric line:)

“The *paths of glory* lead but to the *grave*.”

Anybody who knows what an oratorical impulse is must feel that it was hardly possible for the poet to sit still in his chair when that line

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flashed across his mind, as flash it certainly did, for it has all the marks of an orator's inspiration when a crowning thought springs spontaneous in his mind and unsolicited words fall into place and body it forth with the magical perfection of a natural process.

What we wish to indicate is that in their genesis the instinct of the poet and that of the orator are as indistinguishable as are the impulses which, out of a common basis of life, produce in one direction vegetable and in another animal organisms. Gray's poetic masterpiece has the organic form of an eloquent sermon.

But in its effect upon its recipients a poem cannot be as dynamic as an oration. It works through an indirect medium, and consequently loses something of its *vis viva*. Then, too, almost all poems bear the marks of careful tinkering by the author, which if it renders them more perfect in form also makes them more artificial, sacrificing spontaneousness for the sake of technical excellence. The poem is the artist's carefully elaborated picture; the unpremeditated eloquence of the orator is the landscape itself. This, of course, is not meant as a reproach. Although Gray, as we maintain, was inspired with oratorical fervor, he was quite right in working over his "Elegy" as he did, substituting words, weighing and appraising lines, testing the meter, and perfecting the rhymes. Many

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others have done the same thing, though sometimes with doubtful success. A striking example is William Cullen Bryant's change, for the worse, in one of the lines of his "Waterfowl." He had written, with an orator's sense of the imaginative value of the expression:

"Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along."

The third line, as he thus wrote it (not, of course, in our italics) under the inspiration of the moment, was perfect; it thrilled the imagination with a beautiful and unexpected figure. But, seized with an unfortunate desire to make the expression more logical (as if a poem must equal a demonstration in precision of terms!), he afterward altered it to read:

"As, darkly *seen against* the crimson sky."

Instantly the charm was dissolved. The original beauty of the line was destroyed, as some of his friends protestingly pointed out to him, and as all his best editors have since acknowledged by persistently printing the words as they were first written. Since this strikes at the very heart of the matter under discussion, another example of unfortunate emendation may be quoted. In Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman's

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Anthology of American Poetry the opening line of J. B. Brown's incomparable "Thalatta" is printed thus:

"I stand upon the summit of my life."

The reader is not moved by that; the figure is too commonplace. But now see how magically different is the effect of the same line as Mr. Knowles gives it in his *Golden Treasury of American Songs and Lyrics*:

"I stand upon the summit of my *years*."

At once the reader's imagination is exalted. The introduction of the metaphor "years" for "life" excites the mind, as did Bryant's use of the word "painted" in describing the bird as seen on the distant background of the sky. There cannot be any doubt that the instinct of the born orator, if he had flashed out that line of Mr. Brown's in a speech, would have made him say "years" and not "life," for the orator works in metaphors as necessarily as the painter in colors. Moreover, it seems impossible to believe that "years" was not the word that the author wrote.¹

¹ Perhaps the increased force and beauty derived from the change will be more apparent to the reader, unfamiliar with Brown's poem, if we quote it entire, from Mr. Knowles's rendering. The reference is, of course, to Xenophon's story of the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks across Asia Minor after their failure to put Cyrus on the throne of Artaxerxes, and particularly to the thrilling incident

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The orator would not have the time, if he had the inclination, to amend his expression in this way. He must depend upon the inspiration of the moment, letting the thought find the words, and allowing the sentences to fall as they are born from the lips. In that form they must remain, at least as far as the hearers are concerned. And, in spite of the slips, errors, and inelegancies that are sure to creep in, it is well that it should be so. A stately garden, with its

of their first glimpse, from the mountains, of the level line of the Black Sea, at sight of which the whole army cried out ecstatically: "Thalatta! thalatta!" (The sea! the sea!).

"I stand upon the summit of my years.
Behind the toil, the camp, the march, the strife,
The wandering and the desert; vast, afar,
Beyond this weary way, behold! the Sea!
The sea o'erswept by clouds and winds and wings,
By thoughts and wishes manifold; whose breath
Is freshness, and whose mighty pulse is peace.
Palter no question of the dim Beyond;
Cut loose the bark; such voyage itself is rest;
Majestic motion, unimpeded scope,
A widening heaven, a current without care.
Eternity!—Deliverance, Promise, Course!
Time-tired souls salute thee from the shore."

It will be observed that this poem is remarkably oratorical, both in its rhetorical figures and in its manner of unfolding the thought, and it is worth studying by a speaker on that account. Notice how the effects are wrought by figures merely sketched, by striking words used a little out of their ordinary sense, and by terse phrases which open but momentary glimpses to the imagination, and yet, taken together, produce an integral effect of the most powerful kind. It is thus that the orator speaks when he carries the imagination of his hearers unresisting along with him.

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studied effects, is admirable when one is in the mood to enjoy it; but who would strip the earth of its tangled tropical forests, and its wild beauties of woodland and field?

We have just seen the lamentable effects which may be produced by furbishing up poems where such a process is allowable and often desirable; but far more damaging are similar changes when applied to an oration. It has not infrequently happened that a speaker, led by the desire to shine in the literary firmament, and thinking to improve the form of an address as stenographically reported, has essentially altered the spirit of the production by needlessly changing the phrases, descending to the burrowing work of the writer, diligently searching his dictionary and his memory for cold words to be substituted for those that came winged with life from his lips. The latter, whatever their faults, were charged with a momentary force and meaning which he will labor in vain to impart to any substitutes that he may find. Only in rare instances is any improvement thus effected. Almost invariably the result is unfortunate, if not disastrous. The best report of a great speech has, after all, only the qualities of a photograph; no retouching can supply the atmosphere, the perspective, the tone, and color of nature.

On the other hand, the auditor has not the time, if he has the inclination, to be over-critical of the speaker's words and phrases.

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Any serious break or fault will, of course, attract attention—but at the worst such things are mere specks on the fruit, unregarded if the fruit is good. Ordinarily in the fervor of utterance verbal faults are concealed even from the speaker. He seizes a word in an emergency and transforms it to his need. The hearers catch its new, temporary sense from the context, and accept and understand it because it reflects the fire of thought glowing in the speaker's mind. He may leave a sentence half finished, having struck out its full significance in its first words. Yet, when those words are printed, they appear as fragments of a broken chain, for now they only call up the mental impressions ordinarily associated with them, while lacking the super-meaning which the orator breathed into them by his manner and his tones.

This is one of the principal reasons why no great speech can be truly reported. It defies stenography. Its full power is only for those who hear it. Settling down on the printed page, the words lose their heat like dying embers, and the reader must be content to represent, as best he may, to his imagination, the conflagration of which they were the blazing brands. From all this it results that an oration comes closer to the hearers than any poem can come to its readers. It enters their minds through more direct channels and through a greater number of them. In this respect it stands next to intimate

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personal converse, but is more powerful than that in its effects. Of all the formal products of the mind there is, perhaps, none so entirely personal in its nature and in its effects as an oration. It issues direct from the personality of the speaker, is instinct with his inmost spirit, and it addresses itself straight to the personality and the inner nature of the listeners. It arises from an imperative necessity of expansion and communication felt by its author. It is a bubbling-over of thought and emotion. Hence it is clear that the instinct of oratory can only exist in a mind naturally characterized by the desire to communicate itself to others. When we find this instinct existing coincidently with a natural or acquired disposition to examine subjects of thought not cursorily, but systematically and completely, then the intellectual material necessary to form a great orator is before us.

Not only is the inspiration which produces a noble flight of eloquence fundamentally akin to that of the poet, but the likeness manifests itself even in forms of expression. The impassioned orator is apt to throw his phrases into a rhythmic cadence, which occasionally becomes truly metrical. This in itself would suffice to show that oratory is a more primitive and less sophisticated form of poetic expression. An oration, even when imperfectly reported, often reads more like a poem than like literary prose. Its characteristic passages are poetic—in their license, their

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abandon, their appeal to the imagination and the feelings rather than to the reason. Let us take some examples, and, first, the peroration of Mr. Phillips's celebrated lecture on Toussaint L'Ouverture:

"You think me a fanatic to-night, for you read history not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek and Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England and Fayette for France; will choose Washington as the bright consummate flower of our earlier civilization and John Brown as the ripe fruit of our noonday; and then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write, in the clear blue above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr Toussaint L'Ouverture."

✓ The throngs who listened to that with hearts aflame, and greeted the swelling periods with thunders of applause, were unaware of any extravagance, for the orator's thought was their thought, his enthusiasm burned in their hearts. Like him they belonged to their generation with passionate zeal. It was Homer singing the Iliad to Grecian ears, or Orpheus moving rocks and trees with the sympathetic force of music. An impassioned oration is like the wind blowing with the atmospheric impulses of the hour, and passing away with them. ✓ But observe the poetic insignia in Mr. Phillips's phrases. You can almost scan the sentences; and notice how,

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for the sake of rhythm, he dropped the first syllable from the name of Lafayette.

Then examine this excerpt from Ralph Waldo Emerson's lecture on "Literary Ethics," addressed to the students of Dartmouth College, and which George William Curtis regarded as one of the finest models of eloquence:

"You will hear every day the maxims of a low prudence. You will hear that the first duty is to get land and money, place and name. 'What is this truth you seek? What is this beauty?' men will ask with derision. If, nevertheless, God have called any of you to explore truth and beauty, be bold, be firm, be true. When you shall say: 'As others do, so will I; I renounce, I am sorry for it, my early visions; I must eat of the good of the land, and let learning and romantic expectations go until a more convenient season'—then dies the man in you; then once more perish the buds of art and poetry and science, as they have died already in a thousand thousand men. The hour of that choice is the crisis of your history."

In such a passage one can feel the flow of rhythm in both thought and expression, and perceive at a glance the ineradicable likeness between poetry and oratory.

Take yet another example, for these are all models which every one who wishes to become an orator should study—take Richard Lalor Sheil's reply to Lord Lyndhurst, in defense of Ireland:

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“Whose were the athletic arms that drove your bayonets at Vimier, through the phalanxes that never reeled in the shock of war before? What desperate valor climbed the steepes and filled the moats of Badajos? Tell me, for you must remember that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance, while death fell in showers upon them, when the artillery of France, leveled with the precision of the most deadly science, played against them, when her legions, incited by the voice and inspired by the example of their mighty leader, rushed again and again to the onset—tell me if for an instant, when to hesitate for that instant was to be lost, the ‘aliens’ blanched! And when, at length, the moment for the final and decisive movement had arrived, and the valor which had so long been wisely checked was at length let loose—tell me if Catholic Ireland, with less heroic valor than the natives of this your own glorious isle, precipitated herself upon the foe? The blood of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland flowed in the same stream, on the same field. When the still morning dawned their dead lay cold and stark together; in the same deep pit their bodies were deposited; the green corn of spring is now breaking from their commingled dust; the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave. Partakers in every peril—in the glory shall we not be permitted to participate?”

It would be easy to find hundreds of similar examples. Wherever the words flash hot from the speaker's brain and heart they swing into a measured step. Read Webster's famous perora-

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tion on the American flag, ending with the diapason beat of, "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever!" Or take the grand outburst of Patrick Henry on liberty.

Blank verse often is pure oratory, only labored in the finish. Shakespeare and Milton abound with examples. Hear "Lear":

"I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children.
You owe me no subscription. Then, let fall
Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand, your slave;
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.
But yet I call you servile ministers
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high-engendered battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this!"

Then, in an entirely different strain, Milton:

". . . Black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart. What seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster, moving onward, came as fast
With horrid strides. Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted fiend what this might be admired,
Admired, not feared. God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he nor shunned."

Here we have two moods of the orator caught and elaborated by the poet's pen—the passionate

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appeal, and the dramatic description. Wherever impassioned feeling or vivid representation, or deep pathos comes into play the writer writes as if he were speaking. Yet while the writing may be more perfect in form—though that is not always the case—it lacks the verve, the *élan*, the instantaneous forcefulness of the speaking. Words, as Milton said of books, are not “dead things,” but living forces, instinct with the spirit of humanity, breathed into them during centuries of use—yet they are never really alive except when they are heard, not read. As we have already remarked, the voice, the intonation, the manner of the speaker, the momentary collocation may largely alter the character of a word, imparting to it an energy, a breadth of meaning, which it cannot have when lying inert on the printed page. When spoken, it may resemble the “instantaneous ellipse” of the astronomer, a conception only true and applicable at the moment.

Oratorical eloquence is also akin to music, sharing with it the charm of associated and harmonious sounds, which in themselves express a meaning beyond the reach of words considered simply as conventional symbols of thought. As Ferdinand Brunot said, in an address before the Sorbonne in 1911: “Neither writing nor printing either fixes or transmits the spoken word in its full integrity. Such a word is not merely an image of the thought, but an assemblage of

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tones and sounds. These tones and sounds contribute so much to give character to a language, they serve so well to charm, to persuade, to instruct, that the effect of the most pathetic scene, the most eloquent discourse, the clearest lesson, is diminished, and sometimes lost, if one has not heard the words."

This leads us to consider the physical qualities, and especially the voice, of the orator. There is, undoubtedly, such a thing as "the orator's voice." Although it is not the same in all speakers, and although it is not always manifest in private conversation, it invariably exhibits, when heard, a certain quality, usually described as "magnetic," which is absent from the voices of the majority of men. It is not to be confounded with strength or loudness or carrying power. All these may exist without the peculiar timbre that quickens the nerves. One is tempted to say that the genesis of this voice is spiritual. It generally "goes with" a genius for public speaking. It seems to be an expression of the emotional nature of the speaker, and as such it may be temporarily exhibited by any person under the stress of strong feeling. Its distinguishing characteristic is the sympathetic touch. Its vibrations are such that they awaken a responsive nervous thrill. Singers, of course, have voices remarkable for sympathetic power—still the singer's voice is not the orator's. Many a great orator, with a relatively weak

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voice, possessing no considerable range, has displayed this singular quality in the highest degree.

Mr. Beecher did not possess a strong voice, nor one of much compass. Moreover, it had qualities which some hearers found rather disagreeable than otherwise; yet there was in it the oratorical timbre which stirs an audience to its depths.

Wendell Phillips's voice was not strong. "In the higher register," says Carlos Martyn, "it was thin." Still, the mysterious quality of which we are speaking was there. "Connoisseurs have testified," goes on Mr. Martyn, "that no other speaker here or in Europe put such intense feeling into so small a compass of voice, scaling the heights and sounding the depths of oratory in a colloquial tone. In one of his lectures, speaking of a certain locality in Florence, he said, 'As I walked the pavement I suddenly came upon this inscription under my feet: *On this spot, three hundred years ago, sat Dante!*' It was uttered simply, yet with such entire change of voice and manner that you saw what he saw—the image of the Tuscan poet who went down into hell. Dante was conjured into being, and stood revealed, in the solemn hush of that rhetorical pause."

This power, or quality, of the orator excites the admiration of the most cultivated as well as of ignorant hearers. Emerson once said to a friend at his elbow, while they were listening to Mr.

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Phillips, "I would give a handful of shekels for that man's secret." Emerson was right—it was a *secret*, impenetrable, probably, to its possessor himself. And yet, though he was apparently unaware of it, Mr. Emerson had no cause to envy the orator before him. All who heard his lectures agreed that there was a charm about the man's voice and manner which was irresistible, though different from that of any other speaker. James Russell Lowell found the effect like that of "the sound of a trumpet." Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "There was besides these stirring notes a sweet seriousness in Emerson's voice that was infinitely soothing. So might 'peace, be still' have sounded from the lips that silenced the storm. I remember that in the dreadful war-time, on one of the days of anguish and terror, I fell in with Governor Andrew, on his way to a lecture of Emerson's, where he was going, he said, to relieve the strain on his mind. An hour passed in listening to that flow of thought, calm and clear as the diamond drops that distil from a mountain rock, was a true nepenthe for a careworn soul."

The voice of Demosthenes, which he was at such pains to free from certain physical impediments, must, unquestionably, have possessed this impressive quality, for in reading his great speeches one is at a loss to understand, notwithstanding their literary perfection of form, where their marvelous power over the hearers lay if

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it was not in the emotive tones of the orator, combined with a sympathetic play of features and enforced by speaking gestures.

Yet the orator's voice is elusive. If you ask any one to describe the voice of some celebrated speaker who has charmed him, he will, almost certainly, be unable to give you a clear account of it.

"Was it loud and strong?"

"Oh, not specially."

"Was it remarkably musical?"

"I don't think it was particularly so."

"Did it have a great variety of tones?"

"No."

"Well, what, then, was it like? Did it thrill you?"

"It did, decidedly."

"And why?"

"Oh, I can't tell exactly—there was *something about it*."

And so it is, always; there is "something about" the voice of the born orator which everybody feels, but which nobody can precisely describe.

This again shows why a printed report of an oration fails to convey to the reader all the effects that were felt by the hearers. To this must be added the speaker's manner and bearing, which cannot be pictured. The great poet lives for generations in his books, but the great orator finishes his work with his life. He must accept

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the fact that, in general, his influence will perish with the accents of his voice. But he need not too keenly regret this, for, although it makes him one of the most pathetic, it also makes him one of the noblest figures in the panorama of terrestrial existence.

✓ The best resources of stenography are inadequate to hand down to succeeding generations more than a faint image of a great oration. The orator himself cannot reproduce his work on paper. Demosthenes is but a splendid name, although scholars still read his "Oration on the Crown." Cicero accusing Verres or denouncing Catiline; Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard rousing Europe to precipitate itself in wild crusades against the infidels in the Holy Land; Bossuet filling the souls of skeptical, libidinous courtiers and kings with terror of the Almighty; Pitt stirring the conscience of England; Webster defending the Constitution; Lincoln soothing the hearts of a stricken people—all these are as dreams and visions which can be but dimly recalled. The historic imagination, however vivid, is unable to make us feel what the members of the Constituent Assembly felt when Mirabeau spurred them on; or what the mob in the Forum when Mark Anthony "moved the stones of Rome to rise and mutiny." ✎

Perhaps, as the founders of "The Archives of Speech" in Paris hope, the perfected phonograph may in the future preserve more of the original

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impression made by great orators—aided by the cinemetograph representing their persons and action—but the real force would be lost.

There is another side from which to view the question of instinct as related to oratory. There is not only the instinct on the part of individuals possessing the requisite qualities to *speak*; there is also the instinct of the masses to *hear*. Oratory never loses its popularity. One frequently reads statements to the effect that the orator's day is past. Everybody of good sense knows that this is false. The able speaker is as sure of an eager hearing to-day as he was in the palmiest days of Grecian or Roman eloquence. Even in the emasculated form in which it is usually printed in the newspapers, a great speech on any topic or question of public interest finds more readers than almost anything else. The simple fact of the delivery of such an address is, in itself, news, which the newspapers cannot ignore. It is often an event which must be recorded and commented upon with the other events of the time.

A government of the people by the people would be impossible without public speaking. Can any one imagine a political campaign conducted without such aid? Are not the newspapers compelled to report these speeches, day after day, and do they not, in the sum, exercise a greater influence over the popular mind than all the editorials? No great cause, political, re-

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ligious, or social, was ever successful without the aid of oratory. Sometimes, it must be confessed, the speakers win on the wrong side, for genius is not necessarily attended by righteousness. Newspapers exercise an enormous power in our day, but it is through their news columns rather than their editorial utterances. And even facts, or supposed facts, when stated *viva voce*, are more effective than when read in print. That is why people are not content with the books that a Peary, a Stanley, a Nansen, or a Shackleton writes about his adventures on polar ice-fields or among strange savage tribes, but insist upon seeing and hearing the men themselves. Nothing is so interesting as personality, and therein lies almost the whole power of the speaker.

Let a crisis arise, affecting the interests of a great community, or of an entire nation, and the "winged words" that come from the pulpits, the platforms, or the "stump," have far more immediate influence than anything which may be written on the subject that fires the public mind. It is then that people want to be in direct touch not only with one another, but with those whom they regard as their leaders; and this can only occur through the medium of oratory. The multiplication of books and magazines makes no difference. Why do students flock to the class-room of an eloquent lecturer when they might get all his facts out of textbooks? It is simply because from him, in the

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manner of communication which is the most natural and the most pleasing to men, they learn more of the heart and spirit of the matter than a library of books could teach them. Why do Dr. Johnson's spoken words, written down from his lips by a reporter of unparalleled faithfulness, still stir and interest us while his labored compositions with the pen have, in most cases, become only literary curiosities? Because the first yet retain sparks of their former life, while the second had only a kind of galvanic life to begin with. Read Mr. Chapman's account of the stir among the students of a western Massachusetts college town whenever the rumor got about that Mr. Emerson was in the neighborhood. They would walk any distance to sit in a school-house or a town-hall and listen to the enchanter, whose living words drew them away from their books and inspired them as no productions of the pen could do.

Let a famous speaker visit any of our university towns to-day, the seats of literary and scientific culture, and the whole population—students, professors, savants, no less than townsmen, merchants, clerks, and working people—will flock to hear him; and, so great is the in-born fondness for accomplished oratory, even those who do not agree with the speaker's conclusions will applaud his manner of presenting them. The spoken word from lips inspired is intellectual music.

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There was in my time, at my *alma mater*, a certain professor who possessed the oratorical gift, and he wielded a wider influence than all the rest of the faculty. Whenever and wherever he spoke, and upon whatever subject, the late-comers had to stand, but they stood willingly. Even if his address were upon some purely literary topic, such as "Shakespeare" or "Milton," the "townies" no less than the students and professors were there to hear him. On one occasion he was announced to give an address at the "Decoration Day" ceremonies in the cemetery, and the place could hardly hold the assembled crowds. The graves, the tombs, the bordering fences were black with his auditors, and some of his fellow-professors in the department of literature were among the most eager to obtain good places to hear. He had himself been an officer in the army during the war. He had to speak of soldiers—and he had led them! His description of how "a thin blue line" went up a certain hill in the face of a storm of shot thrilled his hearers like a trumpet-call. "Mere sentimental rhetoric!" Ah! but rhetoric and sentiment, when handled by a master, no less than imagination, as Napoleon declared, move the world—and it is by them that the imagination is awakened.

Only the successful general, glancing over the field of his triumph, can experience the inward joy of conscious power which comes to the great

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orator when he sees a vast audience swayed at his will; and only these two exercise in its highest form the direct control of mind over mind—one might almost say of mind over matter. The self-abandonment with which a soldier follows his leader, his Murat, his Ney, his Jackson, is akin to the thrill that lifts a great audience to its feet under the inspired touch of a master of eloquence. Emerson truly averred that there is nothing that people hear or read so eagerly, with the possible exception of accounts of a famous battle, as anecdotes of eloquence.

You will occasionally hear men declare that they do not wish to listen to "speech-making." But watch them, and you will observe that they, too, are usually present when an orator of acknowledged ability appears, and that they give evidence of being as much moved by the magic as their neighbors. Recall what happened during the famous "Lincoln - Douglas debates" on the eve of the great rebellion. The instinct both of the speakers and the people told them that the only effective way to settle the question of slavery extension would be by that direct encounter of minds which oratory affords. The device of a "debate" in public offered a great advantage to the listeners, since it enabled them to judge each champion in the presence and under the fire of his adversary.

There was no lack of able newspaper discussion of the cause in controversy. One of the most

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powerful molders of public opinion by the pen and one of the greatest newspaper oracles that ever existed—Horace Greeley and his *Tribune*—were then in full activity, and the country was flooded with printed appeals and arguments on both sides. But nobody believed that these could be decisive. There was too little dynamic force in print. The real work must be done by word of mouth, and so the two orators confronted each other in an intellectual duel. No halls could hold their audiences. The meetings were held in groves and town squares. Much stress is now laid upon the irrefragable logic of Lincoln's speeches, and triumphant logic there was in abundance; but read the reports of those speeches, and you will perceive the lightning of emotion playing through them and making them doubly effective. Take, for a single example, a passage from Lincoln's reply to Douglas at Chicago:

"This argument [about the inferiority of the negro] is the same that kings have made use of for enslaving the people in all ages of the world. They always bestrode the necks of the people, not because they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden. That is their argument, and this of Judge Douglas is the same old serpent, which says 'You work and I eat; you toil and I will enjoy the fruits.' Turn it whatever way you will, whether it comes from the mouth of a king as an excuse for enslaving the people, or from the mouth of men of one race as a reason for enslaving the men

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of another race, it is the same. And I hold that if that argument is offered for the purpose of convincing the public mind on this subject, it does not stop with the negro. I should like to know—taking the Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are equal, upon principle, and making exceptions—I should like to ask, where will it stop? If that Declaration is not truth, let us get the statute-book in which we find it and tear it out! Who is so bold as to do it? [Cries of “No! No!”] Let us stick to it, then. Let us stand firmly by it.”

One sees from this single quotation how true was the instinct which led to the holding of this public discussion, for such appeals, which mingled feeling with logic, would not have had a tithe of their actual effect if they had not fallen from the lips of a man addressing his fellow-men and putting the force of his personality behind them. The pen would never have shaped them in the same effective way.

What is true of political questions is equally true of all others. Private and public discussion, by word of mouth, are the forces which lead to decision and action. Great religious movements hardly pretend to depend upon any other form of propagation, for religion being, as Matthew Arnold averred, principally a matter of conduct, it is especially to the emotional nature that it appeals. The Christian religion was not founded upon a book, or upon any printed dogma, but upon the spoken words of its founder, and so far

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as it has depended upon books that are anything more than reports of his sayings it has drifted away from its original; while, on the other hand, every revival of something resembling its real spirit has been the product, as far as the public mind was concerned, of oratory.

A curious example of this, as well as of the stimulating power of speech as contrasted with the relative inertness of print, is furnished by what happened in Spain, when the Emperor Charles V., having disembarrassed himself of the public titles and public functions of his high place, although still keeping his hand on the web of political and theological intrigue in Europe, withdrew to a monastic retreat in remote Estremadura, whence he occasionally caught through the mountain mists a glimpse of the sunlit world in the far-gleaming valley of Plasencia. Suddenly the self-discrowned Emperor, already nearing his end, was startled by the news that heresy had penetrated into his well-guarded peninsula, in spite of the circling fires of the *auto-da-fe*. Heresy was to him like the *espada'a* red flag to the enraged bull, and, forgetting his sufferings, he roused himself up to burn it out! Then investigation revealed the surprising fact that the spread of Protestant doctrine in the very stronghold of Jesuitism was chiefly due, not to the cart-loads of new catechisms hidden away in hollow walls and under heaps of refuse in cellars, but to the preaching of a few inspired tongues,

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whose eloquence had formerly moved Charles himself when they spoke in another cause. In Seville it was the monk Constantin, managing in the face of the Inquisition to introduce seeds of the new doctrine into his sermons—Constantin, who, when his anxious friends asked him why he was so frequently summoned before the inquisitors, replied, "Because they want to burn me, but they find that I am still too green." In northern Spain it was another preacher who inspired the rising religious revolt that so roused the fury of the dying Emperor, and set Philip II. at work with his fagots.

The spirit of physical science itself is better imparted by lectures than by books; and the lecturer is effective in proportion as he possesses the oratorical instinct. Tyndall drew into the fold of science thousands of minds that were insensible to the contents of text-books. He carried the fascination of his speech, if not of his manner, into his writings, which read as if they were addressed to a roomful of eager, applauding hearers. Who was the great champion of evolutionary doctrines before the intelligent masses during the last half of the nineteenth century? Not Darwin, although he could write so well, but Huxley, who, because he had the instinct of the orator, could charm a packed house for an hour and a half, talking on so abstruse a subject as "the physical basis of life."

In fine we may safely conclude that there is

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no weight in the allegation that the age of public speaking is past or passing. The taste for oratory is an expression of our social nature. It originates in the same instinct which causes people to drop their books and newspapers or turn from their studies when a conversation begins around them. The current of living thought draws them into its eddies and carries them away. This tendency is felt even though the subject of the conversation be of a trifling character. However slight the topic, it derives a factitious interest and importance from the rapid discharges between different minds. It is personal, emotional, alive, electric. It is man to man, giving and receiving ideas and impressions warm from the heart and the intelligence. And whenever the question under discussion is one of universal import the tendency becomes irresistible to seek a wider field—the field of oratory, where the intensity of the impression is magnified almost in the ratio of the number of minds brought under its spell.

II

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SUPPOSE one is convinced that he possesses the instinct and talent requisite to form an orator—how is he to proceed in order to develop his powers to the best advantage? The work of preparation may be discussed under two heads—first, general preparation; and second, preparation for a particular effort.

1. *General Preparation.*—Although ours is an age of education, when universities and schools of all kinds abound, and when all who have the means pass a considerable number of their earlier years under the direction of trained teachers and in the more or less systematic study of text-books, yet it is no less true now than in any former time that genius is virtually independent of academic instruction. A college or university “degree” not only cannot confer ability, but it does not even offer definite and final evidence of the possession of ability. Undoubtedly, if it has been obtained by fair means, it shows that its possessor has a certain amount of intelligence and power of mental application. But these may just as well exist in one who has

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not had the opportunities of a college education. / All that the college or university can do is to show the road and open the gates to learning and intellectual cultivation. The student who is alive to these advantages makes, perhaps, more rapid progress than one who has to find his own way; but the college can only carry him a comparatively short distance on his journey. It teaches him quickly the use of his tools; but the real work, and the attainment of complete mastery, remain to be achieved after he has come into actual contact with the problems of life. All these are commonplaces and are only mentioned as preliminary to the statement that, in what follows, no distinction is made between the college man and the "self-made" man. The advice that is given is applicable to both alike, and at every stage in their progress.

✓Mental habits, then, are the first things to be attended to. Practise continuous thinking on any subject that may be before the mind. Get at the heart of it, and it will sprout and develop spontaneously. Teach yourself to be logical, without necessarily going to the books on logic. Abraham Lincoln's biographers aver that he trained himself to logical thinking by studying the geometrical demonstrations of Euclid (one of the three or four only books which he possessed in his youth), and applying similar methods in all his mental operations. If this be so, it indicates the existence of an innate logical faculty in the

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mind of a boy who, dwelling with poverty in a wilderness, could devise such a method of improving his powers. Lincoln's was a master mind seeking its own way. It was not from Euclid that he derived his power; and his choice of geometry as an aid in developing a rigid manner of thinking was simply an instinctive recognition of the laws of thought. The choice was an accident, due to the narrow limitation of the material presented to him. He would have found an equal aid, and perhaps one leading more directly to his object, in a book on logic, if he had possessed one. He was born with the oratorical gift, and began making speeches when hardly more than a child. But he felt the need of guiding and controlling the strong emotional tendency of his nature by clarifying his reasoning powers. /

/ We could hardly find a better example than Lincoln of the proper method of acquiring the ability not only to think clearly, but to give clear expression to thought. He has himself described the efforts that he made, as he grew up, to obtain his power. He used to listen intently to his elders when they were discussing political or other subjects, and by their very imperfections he perfected himself. If he heard an argument that did not seem to him logically put, he went home and pored over it until he had got it in the right shape. If the speakers lacked clearness of expression, he restated to himself what

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he believed they were trying to say until he found the words that expressed the exact meaning. If Lincoln had been able to go to college we cannot doubt that he would have practised the same self-discipline, with better advantages; and yet it cannot be confidently averred that, in the end, he would have gained very much more. After all, the principal thing is the instinct; if that exists all the rest will follow. The seed will grow if it can get the elements of growth, and it is not always the cultivated soil which furnishes those elements in the greatest abundance.

One of the most valuable pieces of advice that can be given is to cultivate the habit of independent thinking. Accept nothing purely on authority. Never read a book without examining its assumptions and testing its reasoning. We know a public speaker who has said that in his youth he read Paine's *Age of Reason*, and disputed almost every one of its propositions for himself, without consulting anybody, putting his thoughts into words, without writing, and with the book under his eyes; and, although he has since changed his opinion about many things which then seemed certain to him, he still considers the discipline which he obtained from this exercise in independent thinking, and in the unwritten expression of thought, to have been the basis of his education as an orator.

There is hardly one person in a hundred who ever thinks of training his mind to systematic thinking,

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and yet the lack of such training is the principal cause of failure in life, whatever the occupation may be. The college student in general does less independent thinking than the young man who has to educate himself. The former ordinarily gets his conclusions at second hand and ready made, and only if he possesses exceptional ability does he recognize that, for him, such things are no conclusions at all. The old device of the debating society is one of the best aids to mental cultivation, especially from our present viewpoint, that has ever been invented. Many a famous orator has traced the first recognition of his latent powers, and the earliest development of them, back to some country school-house where, in the dim light of tallow candles and the presence of the dignitaries of the township, he learned to think on his feet and to find instantaneous expression for his thoughts.

✓Language was primarily invented for speaking, not for writing; and, since it embodies thought, there is no reason why it should not keep step with thought. The inability to express oneself freely is largely due to the habit of thinking without simultaneously shaping the thought in words. A thought remains nebulous even in the mind of the thinker as long as he does not concentrate it in words and form it into sentences. Accustom yourself, therefore, to verbal thinking. Whatever the subject of your meditation, seek to communicate it to an imaginary

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auditor. In considering how you can make it plain to him you will make it plain to yourself. If you should thus form a habit of talking in an undertone "to yourself," there will be no great harm in that. It is a habit that many famous men have had, although it is not, in itself, a thing to be recommended. But at least do not fail to present your thoughts to yourself in verbal dress. Words will even suggest thought, and they will always guide and clarify it. It is thus that we become aware both of the richness and the imperfections of language. Most of the new words which are continually finding their way into any living language originate in efforts of this kind. ✓

The habit of thinking in words, of always trying to put your thought in a communicable form, will unconsciously cultivate the power of extemporization, which is the distinguishing mark of the orator. You can thus make orations "in the closet," as Napoleon made campaigns on a chart, with red-headed and blue-headed pins for armies. Then, too, you will in this way store up unconsciously a great number of ripened ideas, suggestions, and images, which, sometime, when you have forgotten about them, will offer themselves at a critical moment, flocking to your lips, unsummoned, with the freshness of an inspiration. These products of solitary, systematic verbal thinking are the trained militia of the orator, ready to pour forth without special

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preparation when a sudden demand for their services arises. They are thoughts habituated to expression, which do not require to be taught the use of arms after the crisis has arrived. Daniel Webster, standing on the heights of Quebec and listening in the morning sunlight to the roll of England's world-circling drum, was not content with simply noticing in a general way the significance of what he heard, but, on the spot, he put the thoughts that it suggested into words, which lay dormant in his mind until, years afterward, in the heat of speech, they came to his lips and lighted up one of his great orations with a sudden flaming of the imagination. It is worth while to quote what he said, because of the extreme beauty of the phraseology. It was in his speech upon President Jackson's protest against a resolution of the Senate opposing some of his acts, and the orator had occasion to represent the enormous power against which the Revolutionary patriots had successfully contended.

"A power," he said, "which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England." Mr. Whipple, commenting on this famous oratorical flight, truly remarks that it "flashed on the imagination an image of British power which no statistics could have conveyed to the understanding."

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It will not do to say sneeringly that this was "mere declamation." It is in such things that the peculiar power of the orator resides, and they give wings to his more soberly clad arguments. The effect of that phrase was electric, illuminating the whole speech; and after the orator sat down an enthusiastic listener approached him and asked, "Webster, where did you get that idea of the morning drum-beat?" Mr. Webster knew well where he had got it, and was not unwilling to tell.

You will often be told that you ought to make written notes of what you read, think, and hear. The practice has its advantages in many ways, but he who wishes to become an orator should use it sparingly. Close attention and meditation are worth more than reams of notes. Even the college student who makes elaborate notes of a lecture generally knows less of the subject than his attentive neighbor who only listens closely and thinks. Such notes are really weakeners of the memory—the very thing which they are supposed to aid. Of course there are statements of facts and statistics which must be noted down. Many will also advise you to write out your own thoughts on all kinds of subjects or to keep a "commonplace book" in which to enter them. Unless the entries are statistical this is not a suitable method for the speaker.

It is true that, under our prevailing system of

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education, a great deal of writing is apparently essential, and it is also true, as Bacon said, that "writing makes an exact man"; but this is principally because of the general lack of what we have just been recommending—*viz.*, the habit of thinking in words. What you have written will not come back to you in a speech with the force and freshness of things that you have thought out verbally. It is as rare for a great writer as for a great converser to become a great public speaker. Yet, of course, the two are not absolutely incongruous. Richard Brinsley Sheridan was a brilliant example of the co-existence of splendid literary and equally great oratorical ability. But, upon the whole, writing and speaking are antagonistic—and it is hard for a man to serve two masters. The born orator usually shrinks from the pen. It trammels his thoughts and ties him down to a particular arrangement of words, which is not precisely the same that he would shape in the heat of delivery. Wendell Phillips would lie on his back on a lounge and think out the plan of a speech, relying for its actual delivery "upon his vast accumulated store of facts and illustrations and his tried habit of thinking on his feet." John Bright practised a similar method, sometimes thinking over his approaching speeches in bed. He, too, stored up mentally thoughts, images, and facts and seldom wrote anything, except sometimes a few words of introduction or a brief peroration. Such prac-

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tice is the mental arithmetic of the orator, worth more to him than all the scratchings of the pen.

There is another way in which the habitual association of thought with words suitable to express it orally may be cultivated, and that is by a kind of inward hearing of the words that you read. This can be acquired by representing the sounds in your mind while your eyes follow the lines, as if you were listening to one speaking. It should not be done with the aid of your lips, after the fashion of some untrained readers, but simply by letting each word have its full sonorous value for the internal hearing. A little practice will render this easy without the utterance of the least sound or any movement of the organs of speech. It may be that thus you will read more slowly, but while doing so you will unconsciously acquire the habit of clear, distinct enunciation, which is of the greatest possible importance to the public speaker; and—a thing of equal interest—you will learn to connect *vocal* utterance with the thought, instead of interpreting it only through printed symbols. This will aid you in putting your own thoughts into speech. It is easy to see by the hesitating, stumbling manner in which a person not accustomed to perceive mentally the sounds of printed words reads aloud, that, for him, such words as they lie on the page are not symbols of speech, but only of thought, and have to be translated into phonetic equivalents, with loss of mental energy, before he can take them on

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his tongue. One sometimes hears people boast of their ability to "read a page at a glance." Such facility of comprehension has its advantages, but it is bad practice for the young orator.

After the acquisition of proper mental habits and of a stock of ideas and convictions on subjects of universal human interest, what the orator particularly needs is a store of words, as rich and varied as possible, and so familiar to his tongue that they come at the slightest summons. In the English-speaking world the commonly recognized sources of correct and effective diction are Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible. In studying them, however, it is not merely words that one acquires, but ideas, images, rhetorical figures, and a sense of the fitness of language in the clear and forceful development of thought. They afford also a wonderful mental stimulus.

For simplicity of expression—*homeliness* that is like family talk—there is no model equal to the Bible, either the Old Testament or the New.

"And Israel beheld Joseph's sons and said, Who are these? And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him, and he kissed them and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face, and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed."

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"Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you. . . . Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

There are a thousand pages filled with these simple, direct, telling words and phrases, which contain all the wealth of the purest English undefiled. The Bible is worth more than all the dictionaries. Moreover, it is an immense storehouse of suggestions and illustrative materials with which every speaker must be familiar. Its history and its stories are absorbed into the mind during the earliest years of life, and they never lose their interest through frequency of repetition, while their applications are inexhaustible. They become a hundredfold more effective for many on account of the sacred character ascribed to them; but even for those who regard them only from the viewpoint of national or racial literature they have a force that is all their own. One may miss his mark in drawing for simile, parallel, or suggestion upon Greek, Roman, or modern history or legend, but never in drawing upon the Bible. A reference to Jericho will ordinarily meet with a quicker response than one to Troy, although the legend in the one case be no more authentic than in the other; and Jehovah is an incomparably mightier name to conjure with than Jupiter or Zeus.

This singular power of the Biblical narratives

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and Biblical ideas to impress the sensibilities and the imagination is reflected to an astonishing degree in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which we would place next to the Bible in a list of books to be studied by the orator who wishes to acquire the command of his mother tongue in its simplest and most effective form, and at the same time to fill his mind with images applicable in a hundred varying moods and circumstances. It is customary to regard the *Pilgrim's Progress* as a book suitable only for children, and for untrained and devout readers; and I do not say that it is worth much study in riper years, but in youth it should be assimilated for the simplicity and vividness of its narrative and the amazing imaginative power of its characters and scenes. Apollyon, Giant Despair, Mr. Greatheart, Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Mr. Facing-both-Ways, the Slough of Despond, the Wicket Gate, The Interpreter's House and its exhibitions, The Narrow Way, the By-path, the Lions in the Way, The House Beautiful and its inhabitants, The Valley of Humiliation, The Valley of the Shadow of Death, The Delectable Mountains shining afar, Vanity Fair, with its crowds and booths, The Enchanted Ground—where will one find so marvelous an assemblage of images calculated to appeal instantly and with overwhelming force to the popular imagination? Its richness in this respect is unparalleled in human literature. It is incomparably better for our purpose than Dante's

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immortal dream. It is the orator's own book for showing the way to the popular heart and mind.

For the grand touches go to Milton's "Paradise Lost." One feels the fetters dropping from his mind, and his own imagination beginning to take flight with unfamiliar wings, when he reads those majestic lines, in which language seems to have been carried to its highest power of expression. A "book" of "Paradise Lost" read before the delivery of a speech will sometimes exalt the speaker's style and ennoble his thoughts throughout the entire discourse.

But Shakespeare's works are yet more valuable because more varied. Daniel Webster studied them day and night, and every public speaker should follow his example, as most, in fact, do. Perhaps it would be impossible to find a more magnificent example of the use of such materials than is afforded in Webster's crushing reply to Hayne in the United States Senate. The story is familiar to all readers, but it is worth repeating again. The Southern senator, unfortunately as it turned out, had made an allusion to "Banquo's ghost" in connection with what he called the "murdered coalition." Mr. Webster instantly seized the advantage which his familiarity with Shakespeare afforded him:

"Sir [he said], the honorable member was not entirely happy in his allusion to Banquo's murder and Banquo's ghost. It was not, I think, the friends,

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but the enemies of the murdered Banquo at whose bidding his spirit would not down. The honorable gentleman is fresh in his reading of the English classics, and he can put me right if I am wrong; but according to my poor recollection it was at those who had begun with caresses and ended with foul and treacherous murder that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out 'A ghost!' It made itself visible in the right quarter, and compelled the guilty and the conscience-stricken, and none other, to start with:

'Pr'ythee see there! behold!—look! lo,
If I stand here I saw him'

Their eyeballs were seared (was it not so, sir?) who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their own hand and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness; who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward consciences by ejaculating, through white lips and chattering teeth, 'Thou canst not say I did it!' I have misread the great poet if those who had in no way partaken in the deed of death either found that they were, or feared that they would be, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or exclaimed to a specter created by their own fears and their own remorse, 'Avaunt and quit my sight!' There is another particular, sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblances might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant con-

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temptation. Those who murdered Banquo—what did they win by it? Substantial good? Permanent power? Or disappointment rather, and sore mortification—dust and ashes, the common fate of vaulting ambition o'erleaping itself? Did not even-handed justice ere long commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had 'filed their mind'?—that their ambition, though apparently for the moment successful, had but put a barren scepter in their grasp. Ay, sir,

' . . . a barren scepter in their gripe,
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of theirs succeeding.'

"Sir, I need pursue the allusion no farther. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied, though the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said, I am satisfied also; but that I shall think of. Yes, sir, I will think of that."

Observe how, in familiarizing himself with the tragedy of "Macbeth," Mr. Webster had not only penetrated its inner meaning, but had also enriched and heightened his own diction and clarified his mental vision. It is this last which is of special importance to the orator in studying such masterpieces. An opportunity to analyze a great classic and apply it to the matter in hand may not arise twice in a lifetime; but occasions continually offer themselves when use

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may be made of the stimulus derived from thoughtful reading of the best things that have been produced in English. It is not necessary, and indeed not often desirable, to quote from what one has read, and it is altogether undesirable directly and consciously to imitate anything that has been written even by a Shakespeare; but the unconscious stimulation that such studies afford to both diction and thought is constantly felt, and its value cannot be overestimated.

Everybody owes a debt of gratitude to the publishers of the many modern editions of Shakespeare in little, well-printed, handy volumes; and the orator, whatever his age or experience, would do well always to have one of them in his pocket. The more familiar they become to him the greater the advantage they afford. The "tragedies" are generally worth more for this purpose than the "comedies," while the "histories" take rank between the other two. There is hardly any other reading so suitable for the orator who would keep his imagination active and the stream of diction flowing strong and clear. Shakespeare was without doubt the greatest master of expression of whom we have knowledge. To read "Hamlet," or "Lear," or "Macbeth," or "Antony and Cleopatra," or "Coriolanus," or "The Merchant of Venice," or "A Midsummer Night's Dream," or "Julius Cæsar," or "Timon of Athens," or

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"Troilus and Cressida," or the Falstaff plays, before making an address is like oiling the intellectual machine and stoking the furnaces of the mind. But do not quote from them unless a line springs unbidden to the lips. Burn the wood, and make its caloric force your own; but beware of piling the unburnt fuel before the audience. Your business with Shakespeare and Milton is not to borrow from them, but to absorb and digest the mental food which they offer, in order to strengthen your own forces.

It is not our intention to run over the field of English literature in order to point out all that is most useful to the public speaker. His own taste and good sense should guide him, after he has made a beginning with the really best things. Long experience has proved the value of the adage that it is far better to read a few books thoroughly and frequently than to skim over many hastily and but once. Select a few favorites, and read them many times, both wholly and in part. Your diction, in particular, will gain in this way more than by the cursory reading of twenty times as many books that you never open a second time. Who would be content with a single reading of Bacon's "Essays," or could in that way "get all the good out of" them? A great historical work, even if prejudiced and inaccurate, is an unceasing source of inspiration because of the mental pictures and suggestions which it offers. If you find it

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worth while you can correct its history from other authorities. A master novel, like *Ivanhoe*, is always novel to the unaging imagination. Form, then, the habit of rereading whatever stimulates you.

Of course, one must read books of a special character in order to acquire the vocabularies of the various arts, sciences, and departments of thought. Herbert Spencer, for instance, will furnish the diction of sociology, Burke will show how to treat great questions broadly and imaginatively, Emerson will infuse a little quaintness and abstraction of intellectual view, Macaulay a little swing of style, Bacon a great deal of compression of statement, and Addison, Charles Lamb, De Quincy, and such writers, perspicuity, elegance, smoothness, and picturesqueness. History the orator must absorb, largely and in long draughts, from the original and extensive writers, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, Tacitus, and the great modern historians. Biography is especially useful to the public speaker. He must know something of the works of Plato, Cicero, and other ancient thinkers and rhetoricians, and he should by no means neglect the Greek drama; but it is unnecessary to learn Greek and Latin unless one has a special taste for them. All the great works of antiquity have been translated in a manner to satisfy everybody except specialists in linguistic study. It is primarily for knowledge, illustrative material,

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and inspiration that one reads these things, and, even after the unquestioned loss which they suffer by being put into another tongue, they are marvelous awakeners of original thought and stimulators of expression.

It goes without saying that the public speaker must be deep in the history and familiar with the social aspects of his own time and day. Often it is not until late in life that the studious man begins fully to appreciate the fact that his own age is the most interesting and important that has ever been, and that nothing that has gone before is of any consequence except in its bearing upon the present.

You will, of course, study the great specimens of oratory that the press partially preserves; but, as before said, you should beware of directly imitating them. Do not learn them by heart and declaim them. That is too much like a painter copying a masterpiece—it is apt to destroy the instinct of originality. In an oration a man must be himself alone. In no art is imitation more fatal. As we have already pointed out, the essence of oratory is in its personal character. Learn to recognize what is good and what is bad in the examples of others; enrich your diction, and cultivate your reasoning powers with their aid—but do not put your feet in their steps, as if you were following a guide over a crevassed snow-field. The mountaineer develops his powers by first observing what others do,

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and then, finally, taking the lead and the risks himself.

But it is not simply by reading that one can perfect himself for public speaking. Rufus Choate used to enlarge his already immense vocabulary by perusing, critically, every day, a page of a dictionary. This practice is often commended, and no doubt it is a good one. It not only increases the stock of words at one's command, but it purifies the speech, for the meanings, the distinctions, the precise values, the pronunciations, and the derivations of the words will all be studied at once. Very useful also is a book of synonyms and antonyms. Such works as Trench's *Study of Words* and Whitney's *Study of Language* are to be recommended. If you know the history of a word you can often employ it in such a manner that it will have redoubled force. Best of all for obtaining command over current speech is intercourse with intelligent people. Mr. Whipple has quoted some very wise utterances of Webster on this subject:

✓ "Webster laid great emphasis on conversation as one of the most important sources of imagery as well as of positive knowledge. 'In my education,' he once remarked to Charles Sumner, 'I have found that conversation with the intelligent men I have had the good-fortune to meet has done more for me than books ever did, for I learn more from them in a talk of half an

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hour than I could possibly learn from their books. Their minds in conversation come into intimate contact with my own mind, and I absorb certain secrets of their power, whatever may be its quality, which I could not have detected in their works. Converse, *converse*, CONVERSE with living men, face to face, and mind to mind—that is one of the best sources of knowledge.’”

But one should not confine his intercourse to educated persons. Many a so-called rustic can reveal to you unexpected meanings in words and unrecognized force in language. These things are not to be despised; they are a part of the language of nature, and also of special occupations and lines of thought. They show the true vernacular. An hour in his fields with a farmer who has never left the soil, or in his shop with a mechanic who has seldom opened a book, will often afford a surprising revelation of the inner resources of human speech.

The fact is that poverty of language is too prevalent. Probably the majority of persons whom we call educated have not ready for use more than a thousand different words, yet some dictionaries contain a quarter of a million, counting, of course, derivatives, compounds, and all. Milton, it has been estimated, used eight thousand; Shakespeare, fifteen thousand words.

How many either of them could have employed offhand it is, of course, impossible to guess, for

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the writer can go to his banks, the dictionary, and the thesaurus, as well as stop to make a thorough search of his mental pockets, when in need; but the speaker must have his verbal wealth always in the form of ready cash. One should never be without a variety of synonymous words capable of expressing practically the same idea; but he should not fail to keep their distinctive shades of meaning clear in his mind. Even for this purpose dictionaries and word-books do not equal in value spoken and written language. A dictionary is a parade-ground for the army of a language, while conversations, poems, and orations are its battle-fields.

✓ In addition to his general acquirements every public speaker needs preparation for the particular field which he has chosen for himself. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to point out in what such preparation should consist. It suggests itself. If, for instance, the intention is to become a lawyer—in the old, splendid sense of an advocate to protect and defend the helpless—the learner will perfect himself in facile expression of ideas relating to jurisprudence, justice, and equity. Fortunately English-speaking lawyers have an elementary text-book that stands almost without a rival as a teacher of expression in its own field. It is the celebrated *Commentaries* of Blackstone. Great lawyers have studied it unceasingly throughout their lives, not for its law, but for its power of statement and

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exposition. One can trace its influence, and often its very phrases, in nearly every great opinion pronounced from the bench, and its inspiration commonly appears in notable pleas at the bar. The "jury lawyer" finds it no less stimulating than he who has to present a technical argument. Its study enriches and corrects his diction, and gives him a verbal freedom, reach, and accuracy hardly otherwise to be obtained.

As to pulpit eloquence, the Bible must afford the groundwork, but the study of the critical history of religions cannot, in our day, be neglected. Sermons have a surer direction and far greater usefulness if the preacher has considered, with open mind, all that men have thought, imagined, and done in the name of religion. The mass of mankind is beginning to learn all these facts now; and to ignore them is to invite damaging criticism, contradiction, chagrin, and failure, even within the precincts of the churches themselves. While I have been writing this book an educated and eloquent preacher, in a denomination whose tenets are based upon the visions of a very celebrated man whom Emerson chose as representative of the species "mystic," has come to me to inquire about the veritable facts, as far as modern astronomy has been able to unveil them, concerning the physical condition and the possible habitability of the various planets composing the solar system. He has told me that he can

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no longer satisfy his own mind with things which are contained in his theological books, and that it goes beyond his conscience to teach what he suspects that science has disproved, or what unprejudiced seekers for truth have discarded. He feels that there is a misfit somewhere; but that does not affect his faith in the divine government of the universe, or his desire to teach righteousness in thought and conduct. This is but a sign of the times, indicative of a fast coming age when some new and greater Luther may arise, to bring about, with an irresistible mingling of eloquence and logic, another reformation.

If one sets out for politics and statesmanship, history, in all its forms, must naturally become his stronghold. But the most important history is that which is continually in the making. Here a bit of practical advice may be offered to the young aspirant. Read your newspaper with an open atlas always at your elbow. See the location of every important new event or political movement. You cannot carry in your head enough geography to perceive at a glance all the consequences of social and political progress. Consulting the maps makes you master of the subject as you cannot be without their aid. It fills the mind with a host of ideas which would not otherwise occur. Readers often follow the progress of a war with the help of an atlas; but the student of the daily life of the world, who has

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to digest its meaning, and present his thoughts about it to others, has constant need of charts to be continually consulted. Such works as *The Statesman's Year-Book* and *The Almanac de Gotha* should be in the hands of every young man who means to play a part in public life; but some of our legislators and "stump-speakers" have, apparently, never heard of them. The special vocabulary needed will be supplied by study of the speeches of great statesmen, and of the masterpieces of political history.

If you go in for science—of course we are speaking, not of technical science and original investigation, which are conducted by men who often see no more of the great world about them than miners in an underground gallery, but of the propagation of scientific knowledge and the scientific spirit—then study the great masters of exposition, such as Huxley, Tyndall, and Faraday.

The product of the mines of science, if it is to possess any general value for the world, must not only be carried to the public, but it must be broken up, refined, sorted, selected, and made available for common use. This is an immense field. Herbert Spencer, without doing a stroke of original scientific work, put all science, as well as the world at large, in his debt by this kind of service—although he, to be sure, was no speaker. Gen. O. M. Mitchell, who was a true orator as well as an original investigator, won

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the heart of this continent to astronomy by his popular lectures, and gave an impulse which has, in our day, placed America in the forefront of progress in that science. His addresses were regarded as marvels of eloquence in his time; but, like all the productions of the orator, their personal charm passed away with the magician who handled the wand. As we find them in print they are Pegasus without his wings. There is no more striking example of the transforming effect of the personal magnetism of the speaker upon the matter of his discourse. Tyndall's lectures were not emotional, to any marked degree; but they were essentially oratorical in manner of presentation, and so full of the splendor of the trained imagination that even in reading them one feels much of the original force. But the gift required for popular scientific exposition is a rare one. Louis Agassiz had it, and fascinated audiences, few of whose members had ever seen the inside of a book on ichthyology, would listen to him spellbound for an hour or more. Huxley was in some respects the prince of them all. Read this extract from his address on the "The Physical Basis of Life," which did more to popularize evolutionary doctrine than libraries of books:

"Think of the microscopic fungus—a mere infinitesimal ovoid particle—which finds space and duration enough to multiply into countless millions in the body of a living fly; and then of the wealth of foliage, the

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luxuriance of flower and fruit, which lies between this bald sketch of a plant and the giant pine of California, towering to the dimensions of a cathedral spire, or the Indian fig, which covers acres with its profound shadow, and endures while nations and empires come and go round its vast circumference. Or, turning to the other half of the world of life, picture to yourselves the great finner whale, hugest of beasts that live, or have lived, disporting his eighty or ninety feet of bone, muscle, and blubber, with easy roll, among waves in which the stoutest ship that ever left dockyard would flounder helplessly; and contrast him with the invisible animalcules—mere gelatinous specks, multitudes of which could, in fact, dance upon the point of a needle with the same ease as the angels of the schoolmen could, in imagination. With these images before your minds you may well ask what community of form or structure is there between the animalcule and the whale, or between the fungus and the fig-tree?"

By the study of such models, but without imitation of them, it should not be difficult to form a style of address calculated to hold the attention of any audience on any scientific subject.

Many speakers will devote themselves to expositions of literary and social subjects. The lamentable failures in this field of those who have no real gift or training for the work are continually before us, and yet in no branch of oratorical effort have greater triumphs been won. John B. Gough, perhaps the most purely emotional speaker that America has produced (al-

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though by birth he was an Englishman), would talk of nothing besides temperance. But his discourses, or what we have of them, cannot be too much studied by all who have to speak on any subject of deep popular interest. We give from *Modern Eloquence* two illustrative examples from one of his temperance addresses delivered in England:

“Is it poverty that makes this degradation? I thank God there can be poverty with no degradation. Yes, yes, my earliest recollections are of poverty—hard, bitter, grinding poverty. When I went to visit my native village in 1853, I went in the midst of a glorious English harvest. I went out into the wheat-fields. It seemed as though the hedges were the same that they were twenty-three years ago—as if the farm-houses were the same—and, for the pleasure that it afforded me, I took one wheat-field and walked up and down eight or ten times. Why? Because I remembered a little old woman schoolmistress of the village, with her hand upon her weary back, and her two children, my sister Mary and myself, who gleaned in that field the ears left by the reapers, and we were to have a half-holiday to thrash our wheat and take it to the mill. And I remember the face of that blessed mother of mine, who, though she was poor, was never degraded. She was one of the Lord Jesus Christ’s nobility; she had obtained the sign and seal in His blood. He saw fit to try her; He put her in the crucible, and when He saw His image reflected in the gold He took her home. Oh, there was no degradation there! I remember how her face brightened and

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she would thank God when I used to come in and say: 'Mother, good news. Flour is down, and the loaf has fallen a penny.' Ah, yes, poverty, but, thank God, no degradation!"

Then turn to this:

"It may be a little thing to save a man, but it is everything to the man saved. And that man is worth saving. Worth saving! To be sure he is. I saw a lady one day on Broadway pull off her glove, and as she pulled it off I heard something strike with a rich, jingling sound upon the pavement, and I saw something roll in the distance—a gem, a brilliant; it might have been worth twenty guineas, it might have been worth fifty, it might have been worth one hundred. It rolled to the edge of the curbstone and fell into the gutter—and our New York gutters are perfectly detestable; they are generally deep and very thick. The jewel rolled into it and was out of sight. The lady took her delicate parasol and poked about in the gutter, then brought it up, but it was no use. Stripping the sleeve that covered her white arm, down went the white arm into the mud, and she poked about until she got the gem; she held it daintily in her fingers, and I could not help but laugh to see her shake off the mud and go into a shop near by to get her arm cleansed. You do not blame her for seeking to rescue her gem. But a man is worth more than a diamond!"

In simplicity of diction, directness of appeal, effectiveness of illustration, no speaker has ever excelled Mr. Gough. It is no wonder that the largest halls could not hold his would-be hearers.

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And those who merely read the reports of his addresses lose all the magic of voice, tones, manner, action. Yet these reports, with all their imperfections, are invaluable for the study of any one who would be an orator and move multitudes by his presentation of social topics like those that were treated by the great apostle of temperance.

A volume of reports of the speeches and lectures of Wendell Phillips is also indispensable to the library of the speaker. So, too, the reports of Mr. Beecher's oratorical campaign in England in 1863, when, as many believe, he prevented the interference of the British government in behalf of the States in rebellion.

Literature itself gains readers through the efforts of those who present its charms upon the platform. How many such were won by the eloquent addresses of George William Curtis! The lyceum system, which prevailed during the middle of the nineteenth century in New England, and more or less throughout the United States, has perished, giving place to the "illustrated lecture" in which exciting "moving pictures" and beautiful "still views" hold the attention of the audience, and conceal the incapacity of the speaker. Oratory, in its true sense, is impossible with such accompaniments. A few speakers yet uphold the tradition of the lecture platform; but there is need of a revival of the old spirit, which made it one of the most powerful agencies

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for the dissemination of intelligent thought and the guidance of the public mind on subjects of universal interest.

In addition to his training in the art of clear, consecutive thinking, his study of the best oratorical styles, and his accumulation of a stock of facts, words, ideas, and images suitable to his purpose, the public speaker must make whatever efforts he can to perfect his memory. Many are born with a power of memory which seems to need no training, and they are very fortunate; but many others, whose purely intellectual qualities may be of the finest, suffer from defective memory. Many systems of mnemonics have been invented, and we shall not review them here. In most cases they appear to be of doubtful value.

The best general rule is to train the attention, for whatever has been fully grasped by the mind is apt to stick. Keep your mind from wandering, go to the bottom of the subject, see clearly its foundations and its essential relations, and it is not likely afterward to escape you. Some persons have a memory which is quick, and apparently thorough in its grasp, but which, nevertheless, does not hold on very long. It lets go after the mind has been turned, for a considerable time, to other subjects. We are acquainted with a speaker who possesses this kind of memory, and, whether rightly or wrongly, he ascribes it to the habit of making written notes in his

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earlier years. If he has a discourse to give requiring the statement of a great number of facts, dates, or figures, he can very quickly charge his memory with them, and they remain long enough to serve his immediate purpose; but a few days or a few weeks later he finds that they have escaped, and if he has to repeat his discourse he must recharge his memory with its load.

The best way to insure the retention of a new word is to make use of it at the first opportunity, and to use it habitually until it springs instinctively to the lips. So, too, the best way to retain new facts is to talk about them. This is one of the advantages of conversation that Mr. Webster did not mention in his admirable description of its usefulness to the orator. Although the memory is the most capricious of the faculties, it apparently likes to be trusted, and will generally reward those who lean upon it with unquestioning faith. It resembles the patient mule which resents beating, but appreciates confidence. It will not serve you better, but worse, if you relieve it of its proper burdens and commit them to writing. There is a very applicable remark of Plato to the effect that what we have written we forget for the very reason that in the act of committing it to writing we release the memory from its responsibility.

✓An excellent general way to strengthen the memory is to learn short poems by heart. Take

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poems that specially appeal to you—mainly lyrical pieces, not such things as Hamlet's soliloquy—and thoroughly commit them, so that you know them as perfectly as A, B, C. Say them over in bed on sleepless nights—when they may act as soporifics. Not only does this habit tend to strengthen the memory in general, but it serves another purpose by furnishing ready quotations, single lines, or couplets, which will sometime occur to you spontaneously, the only way in which such quotations possess any value in a speech. / For if you prepare a quotation in advance to adorn your discourse, it will plague you, and hang like a weight on your mind until you have got rid of it; and when you do drag it in, with its leash inevitably showing, it is apt to bring you to confusion like an unwilling dog. It then becomes simply an exhibition and spoils the spontaneity of your speech. But if a quotation rises unsummoned out of the depths of your mind because it fits and enforces the thought, it will be a real ornament of the only admissible kind—the kind that is at once ornamental and structural. Of course, there are occasions when more or less elaborate quotations must be introduced for special purposes; but we are speaking only of such as are incidental, and they should come out of the man and the occasion, as flowers spring up along a brook.

There is, perhaps, a still more important way in which the practice of learning poems by heart,

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and getting them ingrained in the mind, helps the speaker—*viz.*, by furnishing him with words and phrases which have been wrought into the most perfect possible settings, and leading him unconsciously to form such settings for himself. The poets have labored long and scrupulously upon their gems; they are the refiners of the gold of language, and they have formed a higher dictionary, a kind of calculus of speech, revealing powers which sometimes seem magical. The stream of expression occasionally runs low even for the practised speaker; it has its periods of drought, when words come hard and dry, and cannot easily be found. At such a time to read, or recite from memory, a poem remarkable for its mastery of diction, such as Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," or Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," is like "shooting a well" to set the water flowing. The orator can afford to accept this aid from the poet, for, after all, he is only drawing upon a common, accumulated store of expression, wherein language has been won from its dross and arrayed in piles of pure metal; and in the inspired orator's hands it sometimes performs Shylock's miracle, breeding coin from coin.

We come next to the physical qualifications of the speaker. We have already referred to the "orator's voice," and the peculiar qualities which seem to be bestowed upon it by nature. But, of course, any voice may be improved by train-

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ing. The things most essential to a good speaking voice are a fair degree of loudness, clearness, and carrying power, together with a considerable range of tone. But in no part of his preparatory work is the young orator in so great peril of doing himself more harm than good as in this matter of training the voice. A "cultivated" voice, in the sense in which it seems often to be understood, is little better than an abomination. It is purely a production of the trainer, and is about as admirable to the ear of a judicious listener as the cable-knots of muscle on the arms of a wrestler are to the eye of a spectator who knows what the law of harmonious proportions in the human figure demands. An orator is not a vocal gladiator. The speaker who has a good, full, natural voice, suited to his bodily make-up and developed by proper exercise, will find his "thunder tones" without effort whenever the lightning of his thoughts demands them. A recent writer on oratory has undertaken to ridicule Archbishop Whately's views on elocutionary training, and has even applied the *argumentum ad hominem* to him because, forsooth, Dr. Whately was himself a poor speaker! But it is "a good divine that follows his own instructions," and certainly no wiser words were ever written on this subject than those in Whately's *Rhetoric*.

General cultivation of the voice is always desirable, and sometimes essential. The voice

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should be gently strengthened, and increased in range and volume. The nature and amount of such exercise will suggest themselves to any self-observant person. At the same time there is no objection, if you can afford the time and expense, to the taking of a course of instruction in the development, use, and management of the voice; but the teacher should be very carefully selected. Your own ear will tell you much, and a genuine friend, not afraid to speak the truth, may tell you more. But if you go to a professional elocutionist he will be quite likely to make you recite poems, fragments of printed orations, and soliloquies from Shakespeare, with the result of turning you out a half-baked actor. This will not do at all! The orator should be anything but an actor. He must be himself, and an actor is somebody else. The public speaker should be the least artificial of men—his whole success depends upon it.

People often talk of "natural acting" on the stage; but, with very rare exceptions, to which reference will presently be made, there is no such thing. John B. Gough has frequently been cited as an example of an orator-actor, or an actor-orator; but to call him an actor because he often mimicked characters well known in daily life, or because he threw dramatic intensity into his descriptions of scenes and persons, is totally to misconceive him. He had a voice endowed with remarkable variety of tone, and he

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also possessed, as he himself recorded in his autobiography, the singular power of ventriloquy. He could sing, and was naturally a mimic; but he was his own trainer, and his so-called "acting" differed from that of the actor on the stage in that it was a representation of his own experiences and observations, expressed in his own words. Even when he called his imagination into play it was not as the actor figures to himself a scene that the playwright has invented. We are here dealing with something which lies far beyond the range of the histrionic art. What actor could ever have given, as Gough gave it, the picture of a boat-load of careless amusement-seekers drifting unawares into the treacherous rapids above Niagara, laughing at the repeated warnings shouted from the shore, and finally, when too late, becoming aware of their peril by seeing the trees shoot by them on the bank, and then madly seizing their oars and battling like maniacs for life, only to curve swiftly over the smooth brink with yells and curses of despair?

Or what amount of professional training for the representation of a drama on the stage could have enabled Father Taylor, the famous Boston preacher, to bring his hearers unconsciously upon their feet to see the *descent of a sinner into the Pit*? Both of these orators would have missed their aim if they had been taught by elocutionists. They had a power far beyond the reach of

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any actor, drawn from much deeper sources. It was the power of spontaneity. The public speaker who lacks spontaneity lacks everything; and the tones and accents of the speaker's voice must be as spontaneous as his thoughts, his feelings, and his words. They can only be successfully cultivated if the cultivation is general and not directed to specific or predetermined effects. The actor has to ask himself, "How must I utter this scornful speech?" or, "How am I to draw tears with this sentiment?"—but the orator, never. The scorn and the pathos must come from his heart, born on the instant, and they will pitch and shade and modulate his tones without his thinking about them. The actor has to *imitate* a passion or a sentiment, and he must *learn* their language; but the born orator *finds* the expression with the thought or the feeling.

Now, note this significant fact—when an actor of original genius, such as was Edwin Forrest, becomes impassioned, and, as we say, "throws himself into his part," he sometimes forgets, or disregards, the words of his author and *extemporizes*. Then he becomes, for the time being, an orator. Between the actor and his auditors there is a conventional understanding. They do not forget, and ordinarily he does not wish them to forget, that he is acting. No matter how much the picture may resemble nature, the spectators know that it is not nature; and therein lies the glory of the actor—he is praised for his

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technique—"how *naturally* he did it!"—but does anybody really forget that it was a triumph of art? Read Charles Lamb's essay on "Stage Illusion" for a clear account of one of the forms in which the understanding between the actor and the audience manifests itself. To establish such a link requires the arts of elocution; but the orator cannot thus play double, or, if he undertakes it, he loses his hold.

/ After the voice in importance come bodily carriage, facial expression, and gesticulation. The famous dictum of Demosthenes that the secret of oratory lies in "action, action, action," has been overpressed or misunderstood. Surely the Greek orator did not mean by action simply bodily activity—swinging of the arms, wagging of the head, striding up and down, contorting the visage, opening and shutting the hands, pointing with the fingers; he meant simply that the speaker must be so filled and transfused with his subject that his entire being is aroused, and body and mind spontaneously act together. There is a famous portrait statue of Demosthenes in the Vatican galleries whose attitude suggests that he no more practised the arts of the pantomimist than did Wendell Phillips. In that statue Demosthenes is shown in the act of speaking, but there is not the slightest suggestion of the mimetic about him. To refer again to Phillips, an orator who, above all others in

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modern times, with the possible exception of Webster, was impressive.

Says Carlos Martyn:

"His action comported with his style. Its effectiveness resided in its significance. He made many more gestures than he got credit for; but they were so subordinated to the thought and so illustrative of it that they eluded attention and seemed only parts of one whole. Hence their propriety and ease deceived all but sharp observers into a belief in their infrequency. . . . Imagination influenced the gestures and led to the temperate use of highly symbolic action—always, however, as a help to the language. . . . All the while there was no study, no attitudinizing. . . . This repose, fire under snow, enabled him to husband all his electricity and flash it out to magnetize the audience."

The elocutionists cannot teach these things. They lie beyond their range. They arise out of the personality of the man, inspired by the earnestness of his thought. The elocutionist would be no more out of place in trying to show an Arab beggar how to demand "backsheesh" than in seeking to teach Patrick Henry with what action and what play of features to deliver his celebrated outburst: "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles I. his Cromwell, and George III."—here is heard the Speaker's gavel and the cry of "treason!"—"may profit by their example! If that be treason, make the most of it!"

Gesticulation depends largely upon race and climate. In that respect the far Southern

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peoples retain more of the bodily action of our common "arboreal ancestors" than do we of the placid North. But everywhere dignity, reserve, control, self-mastery have their due effect. All that is really needed is to get rid of any natural or acquired awkwardness of manner or bearing, which, if it exists, your good sense will probably reveal to you; or, if not, your good friends. Correct any habit that you may have of repeating over and over some meaningless or needless gesture, or motion of head or body. But sometimes an orator will have a peculiarity of this kind which is singularly effective. Beecher's "quaint planting of the foot" when he made an emphatic statement or advanced a bold truth is an example of what we mean. But these things must be natural, not studied and consciously exercised. As to the general carriage of the body, sufficient acquaintance with the manners of polite society will give all that is needed. Many trainers would have you learn to dance, and probably it is a good exercise for promoting gracefulness of carriage—but not if it should tempt to such performances as Prof. Hiram Corson records, where a lady, reciting Wordsworth's "Daffodils," on coming to the last lines:

"And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils,"

put her hand to her heart and, with a sentimental flash of the eye upon the audience, danced a few

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graceful steps expressive of exuberant joy, and bowed herself off the platform!

The red Indian orators, as impressive in manner and bearing as any the world has ever seen, were never excelled in appropriate gesticulation and telling play of features, but they had no elocutionists and no mirrors. When you go on the platform do not think of your bearing, nor of your arms, nor of your hands, nor of your clothes—think only of your subject; and not too *anxiously* of that. Make no gestures that you are *aware of*, and use no tones of set purpose. An auditor can tell in an instant whether the gestures are spontaneous or studied, or the tones natural or assumed, and he will give or withhold his sympathy accordingly. In fine, then, train your voice for reach, strength, and variety, and your body for graceful, appropriate carriage—but let the thought and the sentiment guide the words, tones, and gestures when you are speaking.

2. *Preparation for a Particular Effort.*—A written address read or wholly recited from memory is not oratory in the sense in which we are using the term. Such things may have a considerable effect and be useful, but their influence and usefulness decline as newspapers and books multiply. People can now find something to read on every subject of human interest. But they will never be content with that. They still want, and need, to meet speakers face to

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face and mind to mind. But the speakers they wish to hear are those who "talk from their fullness." That is what audiences come together to hear. Emerson has a very wise dictum on this subject:

"It is the vice of our public speaking that it has not abandonment. Somewhere not only every orator, but every man, should let out all the length of all the reins."

Even the occasional speaker, with small oratorical gift, will gain immensely by this abandonment to the genius of his subject. This does not mean that he should not be prepared; but the preparation should be of such a nature as to leave his mind free from the trammels of a fixed form of words. His business, for the moment, is speaking, not writing. The abandonment demanded of him is not to wandering, formless thought, but to thought that has ripened and shaped itself in his mind by previous study and meditation. In other words, while he should speak only of what he thoroughly knows, yet in speaking he should throw himself upon his intellectual resources, and not upon his verbal memory. It is to the *expression* of thought that the rule applies. A man may also write with "abandonment"; but he cannot afterward, by committing to memory what he has written, reproduce it in speech with its original force. It is true that George William Curtis's lectures were eloquent and effective notwithstanding the fact

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that they were written, and more or less completely committed to memory—but they lacked the electric effect of his extempore efforts, like that at the Chicago Convention which nominated Lincoln, when, seeing that the resolution proclaiming the in-born right of all men to liberty was in peril, he sprang upon a table, exclaiming:

“I have to ask this Convention whether they are prepared to go upon record before the country as voting down the words of the Declaration of Independence! I ask gentlemen to gravely consider that in the amendment which I have proposed I have done nothing that the soundest and safest man in all the land might not do; and I ask gentlemen to think well before, upon the free prairies of the West, in the summer of 1860, they dare to wince and quail before the men of Philadelphia of 1776; before they dare to shrink from repeating the words that those great men enunciated!”

This outburst of true oratory, like Wendell Phillips's celebrated denunciation of the attorney-general of Massachusetts, in Faneuil Hall, for truckling to slave-hunters, swept everything before it. Men yelled and cheered—and *voted* as the orator demanded that they should. A “prepared” speech would have had no such effect. But Mr. Curtis had such extraordinary gifts as a writer that they generally overshadowed his oratorical gifts, and when using them in combination he had to resort to the art of the elocutionist.

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The example of Edward Everett is often cited by the elocutionary school, as proving that oratory should be studied in its effects; but charming as Mr. Everett's discourses were, they never produced upon his audiences the effect of what we mean by an oration. They lacked, especially in his later years, those essentials of spontaneous oratory which Mr. Curtis has so eloquently described, "the glow of feeling, the rush of rhetoric, the fiery burst of passionate power, the overwhelming impulse which makes senates adjourn and men spring to arms." Mr. Everett's lectures were bits of literature, recited with marvelous charm of voice and manner, but with the smoke and smell of the lamp upon them. In preparation for one of his discourses he filled his pocket with coins for the express purpose of slapping them and thus producing a golden jingling when he spoke of the power of money. An act such as that performed on the spur of the moment, without premeditation, might have a startling effect, although at the best it could only be theatric; but if the mine is laid in advance the most masterly elocution cannot eliminate the danger that it will "fire back" and damage the speaker in the minds of all judicious hearers.

The only mines that the orator can safely lay are such as lead up, unexpectedly even to himself, to explosions of feeling or flights of imagination; and they will prepare themselves if the

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speaker is full of substance instead of learned-by-heart phrases and memorized tricks of expression. Webster said of his most famous speech—that in reply to Hayne—that he had been preparing for it all his life. He did not need to write before speaking, because he already knew his subject in all its aspects. Henry Ward Beecher usually laid a few brief notes on his desk, and then went ahead, plunging into the heart of his subject. The notes were mere memoranda of “points” that he had thought over, not the headings of a written discourse committed to memory. One of Wendell Phillips’s biographers says that he almost always spoke without notes, and that “on the few occasions when he did use them they were an evident embarrassment; it was like an eagle walking.” Mr. Gough, although he repeated the same lectures hundreds of times, nevertheless spoke extemporaneously—whence his unfailing power over an audience. He told the same stories, and repeated the same ideas, over and over, but he did not write them out, and was at no pains to recall the precise words which he had used on some former occasion.

In fact, there is a certain embarrassment for the speaker in knowing his discourse too well. If he has to repeat it many times he gets tired of it, as actors sometimes get tired of plays which they have presented so often that they can no longer throw the old spirit into them. A well-

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known lecturer says: "I have certain lectures which have been often given, and unavoidably they have settled into more or less fixed forms of expression. If one of these has to be delivered two or three times in quick succession, it becomes distasteful to me—a dead, stiffened thing, an impediment to its own expression—and then I find it necessary to make a violent break away from the tyranny of its fixed phrases. I have often entirely demolished the framework of such a lecture in order to find a new way of putting the same thoughts and sentiments, spontaneity being of more value than form."

It will, nevertheless, happen occasionally that certain pregnant sentences, especially at the beginning of a discourse which has to be repeated, assume a shape in which they express the thought better and more clearly than it could be expressed by any other arrangement and choice of words. The words, in such cases, have crystallized together with the thought, and exhibit the utmost attainable transparency. If, then, the thought appears to be worth preserving, there is no harm in retaining the precise form of expression which experience has demonstrated to be the best; but, in general, the speaker should be careful to keep himself free from memorized phrases. He can avoid them by throwing himself into the heart of his subject and practising the abandonment recommended by Emerson. If he does not do this there is

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always the danger that the audience will share his own consciousness that he is repeating from memory, and will see in him an actor, not an orator. The speaker loses infinitely more than he gains by awaking admiration of his powers of memory; and any dissimulation on his part will be resented or contemned.

We have made it sufficiently clear that the kind of oratory which this book is intended to encourage is that usually known as "extempore speaking"—the extemporaneousness relating, not to the substance of the address, but to its delivery before the audience. Knowledge and the fruits of meditation cannot be extemporized; but phrases and sentences, and sometimes the entire framework of a discourse, can be, and, whenever possible, should be. But we should entirely miss our aim if we did not also make it clear that, ordinarily, a great deal of time and labor must be devoted to the intellectual preparation of a speech or address. Perhaps there is no absolutely best method universally applicable. A great deal depends upon the idiosyncrasies of the individual. Experience teaches better than schools. It is preferable instead of going back to the precepts of the classic authors, such as Quintilian and Cicero, to take the counsel of orators of modern times, who have had to deal with conditions such as exist to-day. Still, in its fundamental principles, oratory is the same now as it was two thousand years ago—except

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that extemporization is, perhaps, relatively a modern development. Both Demosthenes and Cicero seem to have prepared all their great speeches in writing. That would not do to-day. Yet there are many even now who advocate the writing-out of an address preparatory to its delivery. But this method is certainly fatal to spontaneous mental activity when the author is on his feet before his audience. The time occupied in writing and then reading and re-reading and committing to memory would better be employed in carefully thinking over the subject—and this latter method has the immense advantage of leaving the speaker free to vary his thought and form of expression at will, and, according to the necessities of the occasion, making him ready for any interruption or any unforeseen development which may arise in the course of the delivery.

Then there is this other very great advantage in keeping clear of the pen, that the speaker can follow out his thoughts more rapidly than the writer. Often in writing, while one is at work on one passage, he sees dimly ahead another cognate idea which he would not miss or lose if he could write as fast as he could talk. But by the time the pen has overtaken the thought it has faded, or lost its freshness of impression, or assumed a new aspect not so clearly associated with what went before as it was when it first dawned in the mind. The orator, on the

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other hand, arrives quickly, keeps up with his thoughts, or catches them while they are yet fresh and scintillating.

Even dictation does not fully remedy this disadvantage of the writer, although it helps; and often its help goes far enough to change the character of the writing, making it more like spoken discourse—more spontaneity, less literary finish. Dictation would be the best method for a speaker to use in putting his intended address into writing, provided that he afterward abstained from a careful revision of it with the pen. Long dwelling upon the details of the subject; handling and rehandling of ideas; deliberate and laborious selecting and appraising of words; the tendency of words (so packed as many of them are with various meanings) to open up, when kept too long before the mind, distracting by-paths of thought—all these things inevitably produce a wide difference between the work of the writer and that of the speaker, so that a written discourse cannot, in any case, be exactly the same, either in substance or spirit, as one that comes fresh from the mind, with expression as rapid as the thought.

From the very beginning of oratory as an art three essential divisions in the plan of an address have been recognized—the “exordium,” or introductory portion, in which the subject is set forth and an effort is made to put the minds of the audience into a receptive attitude; the

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middle portion, with various subdivisions, concerning which we need not trouble ourselves, in which the subject is developed and the arguments stated; and the "peroration," or conclusion, in which the whole matter is briefly summed up in a way intended to clinch the conclusions and leave a favorable impression on the minds of the hearers. But it is only in a very formal discourse that these divisions are clearly discriminated, and when they are consciously used by the speaker they should not be rendered evident to the audience. Since they are the result of an instinctive operation of the mind, it appears unnecessary to say more about them here. More useful than any such theoretical considerations are the practical hints that distinguished speakers have, from time to time, offered to those who have sought advice from them. Among such indications few are more fruitful than some given by John Bright.

"Upon one occasion," says Mr. Barry O'Brien, in his monograph on John Bright, "he gave Mr. G. W. E. Russell some 'hints' about speech-making. 'Of course,' says Mr. Russell, 'I cannot pretend to recall what he said verbally, but it was like this: "You can't prepare your *subject* too thoroughly, but it is easy to *overprepare* your *words*. Divide your subject into two or three—not more—main sections. For each section prepare 'an island'—by this I mean a carefully prepared sentence to clinch your argument.

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Make this the conclusion of the section, and trust yourself to swim to the next island. Keep the best island for the peroration of the speech, and then sit down.”””

Every experienced speaker will recognize the wisdom of this advice. Mr. Bright's remark about "overpreparing words" is especially pat. The more learned-by-heart sentences you have prepared the greater will be your embarrassment, for even if you do not forget them, wholly or in part, they will prove obstacles in your path, interrupting the smooth development of your thought. The auditors will, almost invariably, perceive when you are reciting and when you are extemporizing. The effort of memory will drop a curtain before your thoughts.

Mr. Bright's suggestion about "islands" is an excellent one, but it might be better if they were not too closely anchored with a fixed form of words. The audience will be better pleased and more effectually moved if they see that you are "swimming" all the while than if, at regulated intervals, they perceive that your feet strike a concealed bottom on which you begin secretly to walk. Do not imagine that you can hide the truth, for it will become more or less evident by a certain jolt in the discourse whenever you reach the prepared ground. But all this, of course, is a matter of management.

The advice about sitting down when you are through is also excellent, and very useful. The

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inexperienced speaker rarely knows when to stop, and even the experienced speaker is sometimes embarrassed about it. This is, perhaps, the reason why prepared perorations have always been popular, not only with hearers, but with speakers who present the major part of an address extemporaneously. Mr. Bright himself was fond of preparing his perorations. But it is a practice which, whatever the age or fame of the orator, is always apt to recall a school-boy's declamation. An eloquent ending, which may have been thought of in a general way, but whose verbal expression springs up spontaneously in a few inspired sentences as consentaneous as a sunset, often produces a great effect—but suppose that the audience perceives that your sunset is painted!

There exists another glimpse of his processes, given by Mr. Bright to a correspondent, which Mr. O'Brien has also quoted:

“To write speeches and then commit them to memory is, as you say, a double slavery which I could not bear. To speak without preparation, especially on great and solemn topics, is rashness, and cannot be recommended. When I intend to speak on anything that seems to me important I consider what it is that I wish to impress upon my audience. I do not write my facts or my arguments, but make notes on two or three or four slips of note-paper, giving the line of argu-

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ment and the facts as they occur to my mind; and I leave the words to come at call while I am speaking. There are occasionally short passages which, for accuracy, I may write down; as sometimes, also—almost invariably—the concluding words or sentences may be written.”

Some very sagacious as well as entertaining counsel on public speaking was given by Francisque Sarcey, the famous French dramatic critic, who was also a lecturer of distinction and wide experience. Strange as it may seem, considering his literary career and reputation, M. Sarcey had a horror of writing—when it had to do with a lecture. He had also a horror of pretending to extemporize in the presence of an audience what one has really prepared, even to the tones and gestures, beforehand. He gave his counsel on this subject in his *Recollections of Middle Life*, which have been put into English by Elizabeth Luther Cary, from whose translation I quote. And first, in regard to improvisation *versus* reading:

“But see to what one is exposed when one reads. Coquelin read one evening, at the Salle des Capucines, a lecture on the art of the comedian, and, speaking of the great artists who had made the stage illustrious, he quoted the name of Régnier. You know that Régnier was his professor at the Conservatory, and that he encouraged his first steps at the Comédie Française.

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At his name Coquelin stops, takes a moment of time, and says, in a broken voice, 'Pardon, gentlemen, if I cannot overcome my emotion.' The action, if it had truly sprung from improvisation, would have touched the audience. But no! it was marked in advance; the orator said to himself, 'Here I will be moved—my voice will choke, or break—I shall be forced to suspend my reading for an instant!' It was, then, only the trick of the actor, and instead of softening us toward the lecturer, we admired the art with which he rendered his part."

As to the final preparation of the speaker before going to meet his audience, M. Sarcey says:

"When you have taken all your notes; when you have possessed yourself of at least the substance of all the ideas of which the lecture is to be composed, whether you have them already arranged in fine order or in the mass, still confused, seething in your mind; when you have reached the moment of preparation; when you no longer seek anything but the turn to give them, the clearest, the most vivid and picturesque manner in which to express them; when you are so far, mind, my friend, never commit the imprudence of seating yourself at your desk, your notes or your book under your eyes, a pen in your hand. . . . A lecture is never prepared except in walking. The movement of the body lashes the blood and aids the movement of the

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mind. You have possessed your memory of the themes from the development of which the lecture must be formed; pick one out of the pile, the first at hand, or the one you have most at heart, which for the moment attracts you most, and act as if you were before the public; improvise upon it. Yes, force yourself to improvise. Do not trouble yourself about badly constructed phrases, nor inappropriate words—go your way. Push on to the end of the development, and the end once reached, recommence the same exercise; recommence it three times, four times, ten times, without tiring. You will have some trouble at first. The development will be short and meager; but, little by little, around the principal theme there will group themselves accessory ideas, or pat anecdotes, that will extend and enrich it. Do not stop in this work until you notice that in taking up the same theme you fall into the same development, and that this development, with its turns of language and order of phrases, fixes itself in your memory.”

At this point the reader may say, “But M. Sarcey is recommending nothing less than a preliminary composition of the lecture, by a far more laborious method than that of writing.” Listen, however, to his explanation:

“For what is the purpose of the exercise that I recommend to you? To prepare for you a wide

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and fertile field of terms and phrases upon the subject that you are to treat. You have the idea—you must seek the expression. You fear that words and forms of phrase will fail you. A considerable number must be accumulated in advance; it is a store of ammunition with which you provide yourself for the great day. If you commit the imprudence of charging your memory with a single development which must be definitive, you will fall into all the inconveniences that I have brought to your attention; the effect is that of reciting a lesson, and that is chilling; the memory may fail; you may lose the thread, and then you are pulled up short; the phrase has no longer the air of negligence which improvisation alone gives, and which charms the crowd. But if you have prepared a half-dozen developments of the same idea without fixing them either in your memory or upon paper, your mind, the day that you come before your audience, if good-fortune wills that you be in train, is more alert, keener, the necessity of being ready at call communicates to it a lucidity and ardor of which you would not have believed yourself capable. It draws from that mass of words and phrases accumulated beforehand; or rather that mass itself is set in motion and runs toward it and carries it along; the mind follows the flood; it has the appearance of improvising what it recites, and, in fact, it is improvising even while reciting. . . . It will doubt-

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less happen more than once in the course of these successive improvisations that you will hit upon a picturesque word, a witty thrust, a happy phrase. Beware of storing it in your memory, or sticking it on paper like a butterfly fastened on a blank sheet with a pin. If you bring it to the lecture you will certainly wish to place it, and instead of abandoning yourself to improvisation in the development of your idea, you will be wholly occupied in directing it toward the ingenious or brilliant sally that you have stored away."

Much of this advice is capital; but there are few who would have the patience to follow out in detail M. Sarcey's method. In substance, however, it is closely akin to what we have already said about thinking in words. M. Sarcey refers to a simpler method of preparation, practised by M. Thiers. That statesman, when he was turning over in his mind a future speech, used to improvise portions of it in the presence of his guests in the evening, as if it were a part of the conversation. "He was," says M. Sarcey, "firing at a target."

There is one point which M. Sarcey makes that is worthy of special attention—*viz.*, the beneficial effect of walking while engaged in thought. This is no discovery of his. Bodily exercise, and walking in particular, has a marvelously stimulating influence over the brain. The effect may be

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obtained by simply pacing to and fro in a room. Many speakers and lecturers are accustomed to prepare in that way their thoughts for public presentation. The explanation, no doubt, lies in the increased circulation of the blood, of which the brain gets its share. Lincoln worked over some of his speeches while splitting his celebrated rails; and everybody has read how Gladstone used to prepare to demolish his opponents in Parliament by tuning his mind to the cutting strokes of his ax. I once knew a very effective speaker, the wonder of a country debating club, who elaborated his discourses while following the plow. One of the best speeches I ever heard was, the speaker assured me, entirely prepared during a three-mile walk to the hall where it was delivered. Many find complete rest, an hour or so before speaking, better than exercise. A short nap just before going on the platform has often a surprising effect. Mr. Bright's remark about the danger of verbal overpreparation may be applied to overpreparation even of the substance of the speech. It is better—at least for some minds, and M. Sarscey to the contrary notwithstanding—to keep the thoughts that are to be developed in solution in the mind, somewhat nebulous, though of course not chaotic, but all ready to condense. If they are not already crystallized they will be more manageable after you begin to speak, and better subject to spontaneous development.

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There is still a different method which certain speakers practise. They write out the entire discourse and commit parts of it to memory. Then they lay the manuscript on the table in the presence of the audience, and read perhaps the larger part of it, but, at prearranged points, they turn from the table and repeat the committed portions as if they were extempore and suggested by the occasion; only every observant auditor perceives that they are neither. Such devices are unworthy of the orator, and only arise from the attempt to unite two uncombinable elements—writing and speaking.

If, after all that has been said, you feel that you *must* write; if, like the inexperienced or timid swimmer, you shrink from the brink and dare not take the plunge, then make no pretenses, but frankly *read* your production. It will not be an oration, and you will not experience the thrill of the orator who carries great audiences away with the rush of his eloquence; but your effort may be useful and earn you some credit.

There is one other way in which you may utilize a written discourse, and that is by treating it as if it were the production of another, a summary of the things you wish to say. Read it over, fix its general drift in your mind, without learning any of it by heart, and then develop the subject before the audience in the manner and with the words which occur to you at the moment.

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Still, we must insist that you will never be a capable public speaker unless you learn to speak before an audience as confidently as before a group of friends. It will be a great joy to you when you make the discovery that you can do that. If you have previously had the habit of carefully preparing and committing what you have to say, you will feel as if shackles had been stricken from your mind when you begin to speak fluently without such preparation. If a personal reference here may be made, I would recall the pleasure attending my first experience of this kind of emancipation. It was in a college debating society, where, through lack of confidence, I had been accustomed to recite from memory. One night I was called up under circumstances which rendered refusal impossible. Dismayed and excited, I plunged into my subject, and was presently amazed to find myself speaking with a volubility and freedom which I had never imagined that I could command. Ideas, words, flocked to me until I was probably the most surprised, and certainly the most delighted, person in the room—and my impromptu speech won the decision for our side of the debate.

One cannot, it is true, invariably expect the same degree of success—but that is so whatever the kind of preparation or form of delivery. Not very long after the little incident to which I have referred I undertook, under the influence

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of a return of diffidence, to deliver a memorized address before the class in rhetoric. My subject was "Napoleon," and my grandiloquence soared uninterrupted until, reaching the climax, I declared that, at the touch of this conqueror, "weak thrones crumbled, strong thrones trembled, and"—but just there the oration itself crumbled, for memory became a blank in the middle of the sentence, and for my life I could not have recalled the rest of it. I had flown too high to make a graceful descent, my only wing was broken, and the inevitable result was a disastrous tumble. And this is just the danger to which the speaker who relies upon pre-arranged words constantly exposes himself. No matter how well trained his memory may be, the time is sure to come when, owing to some interruption or some cross-current in the mind, his treasured phrases will escape and fly away like frightened birds; and in trying to catch them he will so upset his mental equilibrium that recovery may be, for the time, impossible. With a memorized speech you may, at any instant, be put down by an interruption or an unexpected question—but if you have only your line of thought prepared nothing can put you down. Then your mind is in true contact with the minds of your hearers. It rises and falls with the waves of sentiment in the audience like an unsinkable boat and rides triumphantly to its haven.

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To sum up, then, prepare your subject thoroughly, but do not prepare your words and phrases and try to pass them off as impromptu. Remember that an audience wishes to feel the personality of the speaker and does not expect from him the perfectly polished expression of the writer. They know as well as you do that you have no time to choose out of a host of synonyms the exact word which would most precisely express your meaning—although generally that very word will offer itself to you if you trust it to come. They will not be offended if you fail to round out a sentence as nicely as you might do it with a pen, and they will overlook or disregard hasty slips of grammar, or even an occasional uncouthness of expression, provided that your thought is clear and your earnestness evident. An audience knows without being told whether such things arise from ignorance or simply from accidental stumbling. The athlete loses nothing of the sympathy and admiration of the spectators if his foot happens to slip on a pebble.

Whatever has been written has an atmosphere of artifice about it; but in the finest products of oratory there is something of the carelessness of nature, which looks only to the main effect. The success of an oration depends upon its *ensemble*—that of a poem often upon the beauty of single lines or stanzas, or even the gem-like setting of a few words. Of course, we do not

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mean to say that there should be no artifice whatever about a speech; on the contrary, there must be some artifice. But the all-important thing is to keep the art of the speaker distinct from that of the writer, and to give nature the fullest possible scope.

III.

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ALL your preparations, general and specific, having been made, you stand, at last, in the presence of your audience; and, the ripple or the roar of welcoming applause (bestowed according as you are known or unknown to fame) having subsided, every ear is opened to hear you. There is possibly no moment in human experience not attended by actual physical danger which puts so severe a strain upon a man's courage as this. You appear in the attitude of a challenger. You must seize the attention of that multitude of minds before you and hold it—control it. You have pledged yourself to interest them, to please them, to instruct them, or to convince them. You have nobody but yourself to rely upon. You must have all your resources well in hand. Your hearers may be indifferent, then you must overcome that indifference; they may be hostile, then you must conquer them and win them to your side. Some of the greatest and most experienced orators have acknowledged that they never rise to begin a formal discourse without hearing their hearts

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beating in their ears and feeling their nerves tingling with an inward panic.

In its worst form this natural fear of a crowd, fixing its paralyzing gaze upon an isolated individual, becomes "stage-fright." The limbs tremble; the lips become parched; the tongue seems tied; memory turns a blank; the mind ceases to work. Paradoxical as the statement may appear, the only remedy, if you are thus attacked, is to begin at once to speak—force yourself to say something. Do not imagine that this nervousness is an indication that you are no orator, or that you are going to fail—not to feel nervous might be such an indication. Some of the greatest speeches ever delivered have been begun in the midst of just such a mental upset. If you are master of your subject, and potentially of yourself, these things may be a token of gathering energy. Your whole being is answering to the concentrated attention of the crowd before you. Unconsciously you are measuring your task. The speaker opening his address, like the lion-tamer entering the cage, feels the necessity of self-control. His nervous force reacts upon himself until he begins to exercise it upon its proper object; therefore, we say, again, lose no time, begin to speak.

But in doing so do not pitch your voice high or loud. If the front ranks hear you at the start, that is enough. The audience will quiet down

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and become attentive much sooner if many of them cannot distinguish your opening words. Of course, you should make everybody hear you immediately, if to do so requires no particular effort on your part; but if it is a large hall in which you are speaking, or one with bad acoustic properties, make no attempt, at first, to be heard at the rear. Should somebody call out "Louder!" pay no attention. No person of good sense will make such a demand at the beginning of a discourse. The speaker who begins with a shout, or in a very loud voice, rushes upon disaster, both for his voice and for his address. It is as necessary for the orator to find his proper vocal key as for the singer. We have known speeches, which might otherwise have been good ones, utterly ruined by a preliminary mistake in pitching the voice. It is as difficult to change the tone, when one has once begun, as to tip the axis of a whirling gyroscope. The speaker's nervous system gets into a certain vibration, and if he seeks to change it suddenly at the beginning of his address, the result is confusing and he loses his hold. But if he begins in a moderate tone and speaks slowly, he will quickly find the proper force and *tempo*, and his voice will develop its full power without effort. In a few minutes, if he thinks only of his subject and not at all of himself, all his nervousness will disappear.

More permanent in its effects than the initial

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nervousness of the speaker, which rises to stage-fright only in exceptional cases, is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness varies in accordance with the character of the man who experiences it. If he is a vain man it will make his address stilted and his style vaunting and pretentious; if he is a modest man, within the limits of becoming modesty, it will make him awkward in bearing and speech, and will destroy the force of his thoughts. Now, one of the surest ways to cultivate self-consciousness is to have your memory charged with prepared gestures, tones, and words. These naturally lead you to think of yourself by recalling the attitudinizing of body and mind through which you have gone in studying and committing them. Even the actor cannot altogether get rid of this until he has played his part many times; while you, who will probably have only this single occasion to employ your studied tones and attitudes, are in danger of being so hampered by them that you cannot give even the faintest image of spontaneity to your speech. If, on the other hand, you have in your mind nothing but your subject, and the accumulated product of your reflections upon it, you will not think of yourself at all.

Never ask yourself, "How am I to say this thing?" but go ahead and say it. Do not feel ashamed of it if it happens to be a commonplace, for you will communicate your sense of shame

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to the audience. Say it boldly. The audience will not mind the familiarity if you speak with conviction. You may make a trite remark sound new or give it a new significance—especially if it be clear that it is only a stone in an edifice which you are constructing. The growth of that edifice is what the auditors will attend to. The greatest palaces are built of the common granite of the hills. It is not the basic material in itself; it is the architectural idea, the new or beautiful effects wrought by original combinations, and above all the sight of the workman at his task, that commands their attention. The strength of a speech is in its cumulative force.

Half the charm of oratory is due to the sympathetic sharing of the audience in the work of the speaker. When we look with admiration upon some masterpiece of medieval architecture, some old French cathedral or Flemish town-hall, it is probable that we do not experience a tithe of the interest felt by the contemporaries of the builders, who watched them at their task, seeing the arches rising, the flying buttresses curving into place, the clustered columns developing, the spires climbing heavenward, the mullioned windows rounding out their forms, the sculptured portals displaying their stone broideries, the gargoyles beginning to grin or stare from the eaves and the gutters, the statues mounting to their niches, the rich

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screens turning into carved pictures, and the whole scheme of the architect gradually disclosing itself, taking shape and materializing before their eyes—while the workers themselves derived inspiration from the sympathetic attention of the watchers. It is just so with an oration: the auditors perceive the intellectual structure growing before them, and feel almost as if they were themselves engaged in developing it; and so they are, for they inspire the speaker.

You can count upon this aid from the audience only if you forget yourself and concentrate all your attention upon your work. Old thoughts are ever new when they come fresh from the mind of an interested speaker, bearing the impress of his personality. So do not be worried if brilliant things do not spring to your lips at the start; go on and lay your foundation with rough blocks—your hearers will understand what you are about. They will not lose interest as long as they see that you are progressing. You must be well under way, must have carried your structure to a certain height, before your true strength will become apparent even to yourself.

We may add to what has been said about nervousness that you should not be discouraged if you lack confidence and have a feeling of depression when you step upon the platform, or for some time before going there. Such a

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feeling is often one of the surest prognostics of success. Many speakers have learned that when they feel, in advance, almost certain of failure they are on the eve of a notable triumph. The deeper the depression, often, the more certain the success. On the other hand, a preliminary sense of confidence is frequently a forerunner of failure. Some orators are so well aware of this that they try to suppress any feeling of elation that they may experience before beginning an address; while they look upon a sense of depression as a cloud with a silver lining.

There is a deep psychological principle underlying such experiences. The oratorical temperament, being strongly emotional, oscillates between the clouds and the abyss. When the mind is in an overconfident mood it is at the summit of the swing of the pendulum, and on the point of descending; but when depressed it is at the bottom, ready to mount again, and the orator is fortunate if he can catch it as it rushes to the ascent. It is notorious that the most celebrated speakers are very unequal in their displays of power. Many an audience has been disappointed from this cause—but the speaker cannot help it. He may carry his hearers on a soaring flight that seems to touch the stars, one night, and hardly be able to skim the treetops on another night. Experience will teach you how to deal with such moods; but, with all

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your efforts, you must expect, sometimes, to do no more than save yourself from complete failure. This offers one of the strongest arguments of those who advocate elaborate preparation beforehand. But, still, they are wrong. You cannot eliminate your moods, no matter how completely you have learned your speech by heart—they are in you and they will come out. Even if your memory does not fail, your mental force and ability to dissemble will. There is no more pitiable spectacle than that of a speaker who has committed his address to memory and can recall every word of it, but is unable to put life into the sentences that fall from his lips.

As for your thoughts when you are on your feet, do not worry about them. They will come if you know your subject, and they will usually come in the right order. You can insure this, if necessary, by following Mr. Bright's advice, and preparing "islands," or by making a few suggestive notes on a bit of paper. But, even if the thoughts occur in a different order from that which you had intended, they will arrange themselves if you let them take their way, or "give them their head." This does not mean that you should speak at random, but simply that you should have confidence in the natural logic of all thinking. You may wander for a moment, but your mind will come back, seeing its own way. The extempore speaker resembles the aviator gliding into a flight which

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accords at first with the direction of the wind and the air-currents, but is sure at last to follow the intended course. The very excursions which he is compelled to make often serve to exalt his powers, and thus heighten the interest through the grace and beauty of the enforced evolutions. The speaker gathers confidence as he sees how easily, by simply keeping the mental machinery in operation, the obstacles are overcome or avoided. The important thing is not to let the motive force fail.

One of the wisest things ever uttered on this subject was the remark of President Tappan, of Michigan University, to Andrew D. White, then at the beginning of his long life of public speaking and masterly public service, "Don't stop dead; keep saying something." That is, indeed, the whole secret. You may pause a little, you may collect your thoughts, if you have perfect self-command, but the audience must perceive that you are still in motion—as a soaring bird is in motion even when its wings have, for the moment, ceased to beat the air. Only second to the joy in the speaker's heart when he finds himself sustained on the strong current of thought and expression is the pleasure of an audience in seeing the central idea of the speech freely developed before them. All their sympathy then goes out to the orator; and, through some mysterious medium, they add force to his flight, and sometimes even put thoughts into his mind and

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words upon his tongue. To borrow a picturesque phrase of M. Sarcey's, these things seem to be "blown to the speaker" from his attentive and enraptured hearers. An audience will make you think higher thoughts and employ a nobler language.

Still, the only real source of inspiration for you lies in your subject, and the only way to draw thought out is by fixing your mental gaze upon the core of your discourse. We know hardly more about the birth of thought than about the origin of comets. If you fish openly for ideas you find them as shy as trout; but if you turn your attention only toward your central conception they come flocking into your brain like buzzing flies. The noted French mathematician, Henri Poincaré, has allowed the fact to be recorded that his most abstruse ideas often refuse all his baits, but when he turns his attention to something else, without entirely losing the connection, they burst into his mind unsummoned and crystal-clear. This recalls Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson's sonnet on "Thought," which Emerson so greatly admired.¹ M. Poin-

¹ "O, messenger, art thou the king or I?
Thou dalliest outside the palace gate
Till on thine idle armor lie the late
And heavy dews. The morn's bright, scornful eye
Reminds thee; then, in subtle mockery,
Thou smilest at the window where I wait
That bade thee ride for life. In empty state
My days go on, and false hours prophesy

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caré's experience is not very uncommon. As faint stars are best seen by averting the eye in the field of the telescope while keeping the attention open, so ideas will often reveal themselves in moments of partial distraction.

As for words, trouble yourself even less about them than about your thoughts. Their birth, too, must be from within. Do not hurry them, and if the precise word you would like to use does not offer itself, employ a synonym; or, if necessary, turn the corner with a phrase. Hold on to the thought, and the words will arrive somehow. If you find that you cannot, at the moment, 'finish a sentence as roundly as you would wish, do not be annoyed or allow yourself to be thrown off your balance; finish it as best you can; or leave it unfinished. It is simply one of the accidents of public speaking which everybody understands and makes allowance for. It may even, in certain circumstances, become a source of increased power over the hearers who will perceive that it is not failure of thought which troubles you, but only lack of time to fully develop your thought in appropriate words. Everybody has seen an orator complete a sen-

Thy quick return. At last, in sad despair,
I cease to bid thee, leave thee free as air;
When lo, thou stand'st before me glad and fleet
And lay'st undreamed-of treasures at my feet.
Ah! messenger, thy royal blood to buy
I am too poor. Thou art the king, not I."

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tence with a look, a gesture, or a significant pause more powerful than words would have been. The effect is like that of some unfinished statues, where the artist has not cut away all the marble, but contented himself with indicating the ideal form lying beneath.

The inexperienced speaker, and the experienced one as well, will occasionally find that he has plunged into a suddenly suggested line of thought which he cannot fully work out on the spur of the moment. The best thing to do in such a case is to go on without hesitation. You are then the pilot of a boat shooting the rapids—the general force of the current will carry you safely past the rock if you do not lose your nerve. If you find yourself in an eddy, make as graceful a turn as possible and steer out of it; but “keep saying something.”

You may reflect that it is the *whole impression* of your discourse that will finally be left with your auditors, and that an indication of human imperfection now and then will not be allowed by them to count against you, but will only increase their sympathetic interest. They do not expect, or wish, to be addressed by a deity, but by a man. They have come to see and hear a human being, not a phonograph. So an occasional hesitation in choosing a word, if it causes no essential interruption, and does not seem an indication of confusion of thought, will sometimes aid, instead of detracting from, the effect

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produced by the speaker. Mr. Beecher used often to pause an instant in that way, and it was one of the charms of his style, because it afforded a glimpse of hidden riches. He seemed like a jeweler hesitating among the contents of a drawerful of gems. It was a pleasure sometimes to see him seek and find his words. When he brought them forth they were as bright as pebbles from a brook, flashing with newly imparted meaning. No one can possibly tell all that he knows about a subject which he has studied to the bottom; and an audience is gratified by perceiving that it is from an inexhaustible, flowing stream, not from a cistern, that they are being supplied.

In the radiation of personal magnetism that flows from the master orator, reason, logic, previous conviction, prejudice—everything dissolves, at least for the time being. The scene then presented is the most marvelous display of the molding power of a single mind over a multitude of minds that can possibly be witnessed. You can fully exercise this power, if it has been born in your nature, only by accustoming yourself to speak out your thoughts as they arise in your mind. As you get under way the audience will get under way along with you. You set it in motion, but, like water stirred by a paddle, it will presently begin to flow of itself in the impressed direction. It will gather energy from your energy. It will store up energy for you,

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and after a time you will find yourself riding upon the current which you have created. Then it is that the mysterious reaction of audience upon speaker fully manifests itself.

Some speakers of experience say that the best way to obtain quickly a hold upon the audience, and to retain it, is by fixing the eyes upon some one person who seems to be interested, and to speak as if you were addressing him alone. Hypnotize him, they say, and you will hypnotize the others. But there is a certain timidity hidden behind this advice. The practice implies that you are afraid of the audience as a whole. You avoid their gaze, and that is a mistake. Rather look your entire audience in the face, seeing nobody in particular. Thus you will better catch the inspiration that radiates from the whole assemblage, and not from an individual member of it. To do otherwise is to run the risk of finding yourself fearing to turn aside from your single mentor, like a school-boy orator desperately gluing his eyes upon his prompter. And imagine what would happen if your supposedly interested hearer should suddenly turn his attention to a fascinating neighbor or begin to yawn!

Again, in regard to your personal bearing—your gestures, facial expression, movement of the body and limbs. If by proper exercises you have taught yourself a graceful and appropriate carriage, do not think of these things when you have got upon your feet. They will take care

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of themselves. Elocutionists usually insist too much upon the study of them. Let us take an example which should be convincing as to the natural control of the speaker's thought over the *bodily* expression of it—take the famous outburst of Mirabeau in the Constituent Assembly at the opening of the French Revolution. The representatives of the people, the *tiers état*, struggling for their rights, hesitated when commanded by a messenger from the king to disperse. Suddenly Mirabeau, breaking the embarrassed silence, exclaimed:

“What means this insulting dictation? Display of arms! Violation of the nation's temple!—to command you to submit! Who gives you this command? Your *representative*! [the king]. Who imposes imperious laws upon you? Your representative!—he who should receive them from you; from us, who have been clothed with a political priesthood which is inviolable. Yes, from *us*, from whom twenty-five millions of men await a sure boon—because it ought to be granted, bestowed, and accepted by all. But the liberty of your deliberations is fettered. Military force surrounds the Assembly! Where do we see the enemies of the nation? Is Catiline at our gates? I demand that, assuming the dignity of your office, you fortify yourselves behind the sanctity of your oath. *It does not permit us to separate until we have framed a constitution.*”

Here one can see, through the language of the speaker, the action of the orator. One perceives

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the inflexions, the emphasis, the gestures which he employed. Did he think of them? Surely, no. They were a part of his speech, unstudied, as were the words. But, it may be objected, this is not a fair example; Mirabeau was inspired by such an occasion and such a cause as have fallen to the lot of very few speakers in the history of the world. Nevertheless, the rule applies in every case. The action should be governed by the intensity of the impulse, which in turn depends upon the thought, the subject, and the occasion—and in no case should it be deliberately worked out in advance.

If you speak naturally you will find that almost invariably the gesture, or the bodily expression, precedes your words. Not only does it prepare the audience for what is coming, but it prepares the speaker himself. It puts the thought before him, or defines it in his consciousness, and the verbal expression follows, born from the same impulse. There is an unheard language radiating from the inspired orator which surpasses, though it enforces, speech. But this silent language is never perceived in a learned-by-heart discourse. Here we find the explanation of the statement, made over and over again, concerning every great orator, that his prepared addresses never equaled his impromptu efforts. Mirabeau himself wrote out many of his longer speeches, but, says M. Roustan (an advocate of the memorizing school), it was only

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when he threw aside all manuscript notes to launch himself in eloquent improvisations that his entire genius burst forth. Virtually the same thing has been said of every famous orator, at least of modern times. "But," you may say, "I have not their genius." Nevertheless, try it. You may not equal them, but whatever force is in you will come out when you throw yourself in a trustful spirit upon your resources.

Much, of course, depends upon the character and purpose of the address you are to make. But the underlying principle never varies. If you have to make a speech at a banquet, do not think it necessary to make your audience laugh as soon as you open your mouth. If you have hunted up something funny to say, and particularly if you have rehearsed it, it will very likely fall flat, or only be saved from failure by the good-nature of your friends. You must find your wit, or the occasion for it, on the spot. A genuine laugh is purely an emotional explosion, and a labored witticism cannot command it. It is infinitely better, even at a dinner-table, to be interesting than funny. We shall not conceal the fact that we have the practice of many well-known speakers against us when we insist upon the desirability of pure spontaneity on such occasions. It is recorded of John Bright, even, that at a wedding-breakfast, where he was asked to propose the health of the bride and groom, he quietly slipped out of the room, stayed away

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about twenty minutes, and, on his return to the table, placed a card containing "headings" on a wine-glass before him, and from these notes made his speech. But, observe that it was only a few suggestions that the card carried. If you make no more elaborate preparation than that, there can be no serious objection to the practice. Still, the speaker loses something of his hold every time he looks down at his notes. It is better to let some of your intended "points" go than to search for them on a paper. On more important occasions humor is often an essential element, but it should spring out of the subject and not be lugged in. In short, whether you are making an after-dinner speech or delivering a lecture, a sermon, a political address, or an argument, or presenting a plea to jury, the one only essential thing is to know your subject. That is the only thing of which you may not be deprived by an interruption.

Interruptions, which, of course, you cannot foresee, except in rare cases, you must, in a general way, be prepared to meet. And the best, if not the only, preparation is, again, complete mastery of your subject. But, after all, interruptions are not frequent outside of political meetings, or in debates. Generally you will be allowed to develop your thoughts without interference. Even if interruptions come, you should often welcome them. They may serve your purpose better than silent acquiescence or un-

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expressed dissent. Questions from the audience, too, are frequently an aid to the speaker. It often happens that a lecturer, or other speaker, speaks more eloquently, pleasingly, and convincingly in response to questions than in the body of his discourse. He thus obtains some of the advantages of a conversation. Formality is a paralysis to thought and the death of originality. At the same time, positive and continued resistance in an audience toward the speaker is a serious matter. It can be felt even if it is not audibly expressed, and the orator must use his best judgment in dealing with it. Sometimes great results are obtained by the speaker riding down opposition. We have before referred to the experiences of Mr. Beecher at Liverpool and at Richmond. But it requires the highest powers of oratory to produce such results. Only a very great speaker, dealing with a great subject or a great cause, can conquer the prejudices of an audience if they are generally entertained.

All practised speakers recognize the value of "local allusions," especially in beginning an address. Their usefulness arises from the fact that they afford one of the readiest means of arriving at a common ground of understanding between the speaker and his hearers. The more quickly the speaker ceases to be a person apparently apart from his auditors, breathing another atmosphere, as it were, and standing on another

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level, the sooner he can begin his real task of convincing, converting, or persuading them. One hears of "talking down" to an audience; but no audience would suffer such a thing. The auditors look up to the speaker, in a certain sense, but it is only as they look up to their own higher moods. If he lifts them to a higher ground it must be done by beginning on their plane. For the sake of not multiplying phrases, the term "local allusion" may be taken in a variety of senses. Often it is personal, and sometimes personal to the speaker himself. This will be made plainer by examples. When Cicero defended the right of the Greek poet Archias to style himself a Roman citizen he began with a local allusion which was personal to himself:

"If, O judges," he said, "there be any natural ability in me—and I know how slight it is; or if I have any practice as a speaker—and in that line I do not deny that I have some experience; or if I have any method in my oratory, drawn from my study of the liberal sciences and from that careful training to which I admit that at no part of my life have I ever been disinclined—certainly, of all those qualities this Aulus Licinius Archias is entitled to be among the first to claim from me the benefit as his peculiar right. For, as far as ever my mind can look back upon the space of time that is past and recall the memory of its earliest youth, tracing my life from that starting-point, I see that Archias was the principal causé of my undertaking, and the prin-

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cial means of my mastering, those studies. And if this voice of mine, formed by his encouragement and his precepts, has at times been the instrument of safety to others, undoubtedly I ought, as far as lies in my power, to help and to save the very man from whom I have received that gift which has enabled me to bring aid to many and salvation to some."

Assuredly, in spite of the orator's display of self-admiration, which may have been offensive to some of his hearers, this was, in the circumstances, a very happy beginning. It struck the keynote of the entire discourse, while, at the same time, it recognized what must have been running through the minds of the audience—the well-known fact of Cicero's former intimate relations with his present client. Thus speaker and hearers were placed on a common footing at the very start.

A second example is found in Daniel Webster's opening words when he appeared as special counsel for the State in the prosecution of the murderer of Captain Joseph White, of Salem. To have called Webster, then at the height of his national fame, into this local criminal trial was an extraordinary step, which excited much public comment, and which the counsel for the defense endeavored to represent as an unfair oppression of their client. This gave the orator his opportunity to put himself into immediate personal touch with the jury:

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"I am little accustomed, gentlemen, to the part which I am now attempting to perform. Hardly more than once or twice has it happened to me to be concerned on the side of the government in any criminal prosecution whatever; and never, until the present occasion, in any case affecting life. But I very much regret that it should have been thought necessary to suggest to you that I am brought here 'to hurry you against the law and beyond the evidence.' I hope I have too much regard for justice, and too much respect for my own character, to attempt either; and, were I to make such an attempt, I am sure that in this court nothing can be carried against the law, and that gentlemen intelligent and just as you are, are not, by any power, to be hurried beyond the evidence. Though I could well have wished to shun this occasion I have not felt at liberty to withhold my professional assistance when it is supposed that I may be in some degree useful in investigating and discovering the truth respecting this most extraordinary murder. It has seemed to be a duty incumbent on me, as on every other citizen, to do my best and my utmost to bring to light the perpetrators of this crime. Against the prisoner at the bar, as an individual, I cannot have the slightest prejudice. I would not do him the smallest injury or injustice. But I do not affect to be indifferent to the discovery and the punishment of this deep guilt. I cheerfully share in the opprobrium, how great soever it may be [the prisoner had been a man of high standing in the community], which is cast on those who feel and manifest an anxious concern that all who had a part in planning or a hand in executing this deed of midnight assassi-

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nation may be brought to answer for their enormous crime at the bar of public justice."

Often the allusion may be to some subject of universal interest at the time, such as the weather, which always has a local flavor even when it is but a phase of a general climatic phenomenon. Emerson once threw the charm of a wonderful New England summer over a discourse on theology in a manner which disposed his audience to listen almost unresistingly to statements to which they would have closed their ears if the speaker had not, at the beginning, found a chord which vibrated in all their hearts.

"In this refulgent summer [so he began his celebrated address in the Divinity School at Cambridge] it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of the flowers, the air is full of birds and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm of Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour down their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn. The mystery of nature was never displayed more happily. The corn and the wine have been freely dealt to all creatures, and the never-broken silence with which the old bounty goes forward has not yielded yet one word of explanation."

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Nobody could resist that, for it told, with fervid eloquence, what everybody felt, though none could express it so well, and established instantly a bond of sympathy between speaker and hearers. Moreover, it led, in a perfectly natural way, to the heart of the topic to be discussed. That is a most important point—the introductory words must have an essential connection with what follows, for if not you have your beginning still to make.

One of the happiest “finds” that ever fell to the lot of a speaker was that which Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles made at Athens. The story is, of course, perfectly familiar. Wandering through the wonderful marbled city, with its beautiful vistas of temples and statues, Paul came upon an altar inscribed, “To the Unknown God.” The manner in which he instantly seized upon and utilized this discovery to open the way into the many-sided minds of his hearers would alone suffice to prove that the great apostle was a born orator. His reference to that mysterious altar commanded the immediate and sympathetic attention of the Athenians, and the development of his subject along the line thus suggested affords an ideal model for the use of local allusion and color.

It has sometimes happened that an untoward accident has offered to an alert speaker a means of at once covering his embarrassment and giving a happy turn to his opening words. We do

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not know a better instance of this than what M. Sarcey has recorded concerning his first experience at the "Athénée" in Paris. He was very nervous over his lecture, and he was also very short-sighted. It happened that high up at the back of the stage there was an organ loft with a gallery. As he stepped upon the stage the idea entered his head that he was to speak from this gallery. Not noticing the speaker's table with its glass of water, he hurried up the steps leading to the gallery, and the moment he made his appearance there he heard, "from the dimly perceived distance, the sound of an enormous burst of laughter." While he stood there confused, his manager ran up after him and led him, both laughing together with the audience, down to his proper place at the front of the stage. "Every one," he says, "writhed with laughter. It was a farcical effect, and I was going to speak of the theater! I drew from the incident a very gay exordium, and the laughter continued. Once started, all my fright disappeared as though by enchantment." The result was that M. Sarcey achieved an immense success. What might have been a paralyzing disaster was turned, by the burst of sympathetic feeling, and the ready wit of the speaker, into the happiest of beginnings, which gave a most piquant and unexpected tone to the entire address. The reader will observe that what saved the speaker on this occasion was, first, his instant recognition

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of the applicability of the accident to the subject of his discourse, and, second, his entire freedom from verbal preparation, for while he knew his subject perfectly he had not burdened his memory with a set form of words in which to present it.

The audience itself may offer an unexpected opening for a speaker of great power of improvisation. There is a very interesting story bearing upon this point which is told of the famous French pulpit orator Bossuet. After he had made his reputation, while yet very young, in the provinces, he was invited to Paris; and the fine wits of the Hôtel de Rambouillet thought that it would be amusing to bait this youthful prodigy of eloquence. Accordingly, he was requested to appear at the salon, in the presence of a crowd of elegantly dressed ladies and glittering representatives of the most worldly-minded court in Europe, and preach an extempore sermon from a text to be handed to him just before he began to speak. The young orator did not shirk from the test; and, as he rose and stepped upon a low dais which had been placed for him, a bit of paper was thrust into his hand, which had been drawn from a hat, and on which he found written the words, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." It is said that a peculiar smile curved his lips as he glanced from the text to the fashionable assemblage, arrayed in all its mundane magnificence before him; and

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no wonder, for they had, unwittingly, supplied a "local allusion" of the most pungent quality, and of which they were themselves to be the victims. With exquisite skill, and in courteous though telling phrases, he contrasted the vanities of the world with the teachings of Christianity, and spoke so eloquently that his auditors, who had expected to find a new amusement, were carried out of themselves and listened, with rapt attention and swelling hearts, for two hours. It was eleven o'clock at night when he concluded, and the only gibe that was heard amid a chorus of admiring and wondering approval was the *mot* of the celebrated Voiture, who, referring at the same time to the extreme youth of the speaker and the lateness of the hour, said that he had never before heard a preacher "at once so early and so late," and that, of course, was said only for the sake of its wit.

The lecturer, visiting a town or city unknown to him, may with advantage, if he can arrive a few hours in advance, take a walk or a drive about the place and inform himself concerning any peculiarity which it may have or anything of special interest in its history. If he hits upon something which has some relation to his subject, a reference to it will afford a means of immediately "breaking the ice" between him and his hearers. He may, of course, get a hint at the last moment from some remark of the chairman in introducing him. As a last resort he

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may sometimes take a glance at the weather, which is often of as much use in beginning a speech as in opening a conversation.

It is a mistake to assume that successful extemporization is only possible when the speaker is dealing with some subject that arouses passion or inflames the public mind. It is true that the mind must be heated before thoughts and the language to clothe them begin to pour forth in a torrent, and that is the reason why one can seldom be eloquent at the beginning of an address. But the requisite warming-up will always occur if the orator is deeply interested in what he is saying—and if he is not he would better keep his seat. A great deal of “fire” can be put even into a scientific lecture. If it is not the fire of passion, it may be that of earnestness or of imagination. I recall a college professor of geology who always spoke extemporaneously in all his lectures, and who drew crowds of students from every department, many of whom came together simply to enjoy the unstudied beauty of his earnest descriptions, brightened by touches of the imagination, of the “story of the rocks.” I know another who can fill any house with eager listeners to his addresses on botany, in which the evidences of evolution are made to glow with a fascination comparable with that of the flowers. Gen. O. M. Mitchell, to whom we have several times referred, talking on astronomy before the days of celestial pho-

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tography, awoke the greatest enthusiasm, and probably produced a deeper and more permanent effect than any speaker on the same subject nowadays can do with the aid of all his stereopticon pictures. The imagination infinitely surpasses ocular vision, and is often, when guided by knowledge, far more informing and trustworthy.

This leads to a brief discussion of "illustrated lectures," which are now so popular. As far as our observation goes, the favorite method with those who are foremost in this kind of entertainment is to present a memorized talk in connection with the pictures passing on the screen. We have been told that one of the most widely known lecturers of this class, now no longer before the public, carried the method so far that certain "catch-words" in his discourse were imparted to the operator at the lantern, their occurrence being the signal for changing the picture. Anything more destructive of spontaneity than that would be hard to invent. The lecturer with pictures, especially if he is dealing with "travel," the ordinary topic, can usually be little more than a guide. If he presents a learned-by-heart talk he simply resembles the innumerable professional *cicerones* who conduct parties of tourists through the streets, galleries, and palaces of Europe and the East, wearing out the patience of everybody with their sing-song repetitions, which seem to have ended in some cases by paralyzing their own minds. On

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the contrary, if the lecturer "speaks from his fullness," extemporizing what he says, he still resembles a guide, but now, at least, of that better class who have the ability or the good sense to vary their discourse according to the exigencies of the occasion, and who, consequently, interest intelligent hearers, and earn extra fees, which are spontaneously offered. If the succession of pictures passing before him as before the audience does not afford a sufficient stimulus to the memory and the imagination of the speaker, then he is out of place and should seek some other occupation. If it be said that, nevertheless, such "lecturers" succeed, the reply is that they succeed because the audience is interested by the pictures—it is not the discourse that succeeds, but the exhibition. The interest and the effect would be magnified twentyfold if the speaking were at least as good as the show. When "moving pictures" are employed, the memorized accompaniment becomes unendurable. Such things should never be used, except for the purpose of scientific or other special demonstration.

At the best, pictures on a screen cannot convey the full impression that an intellectual audience desires. The spectators wish to know what these things are in nature, and how they impress an actual observer. Since, after all, it is merely a likeness of the scene that is placed before them, they can obtain its personal im-

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pression at second hand only through the personality of the speaker who has been in its real presence. As the necessarily more or less inaccurate and incompetent representations pass before the eyes the speaker should call upon his imagination and behold again the scenes as he actually saw them, reproducing once more, and afresh, the impressions of *that* moment. If he wishes to make his hearers experience the same emotion that he felt in certain circumstances, or certain places, or at the sight of certain objects, he must himself feel it again, and describe it under the impulse imparted to his mind by its reappearance before him. *He* will be able to see, through the imperfections of the representation, a hundred things which will not be evident, and perhaps not visible, to the audience. Even if it be a specimen of architecture or a painting or statue which he has to describe, he should, in imagination, place himself again before the actual thing, and speak out his thought or his feeling direct from his mind, and not in stereotyped phrases. He should never repeat his lecture in the same words if he can avoid it. A really capable speaker, who is not tied down by a string of memorized phrases, will often, in the very act of glancing at his pictures, see something in them which had not before attracted his attention, and will welcome it as affording a spontaneous addition to his discourse. He should manage to look at the

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pictures along with the audience. Sometimes the spectators themselves will, by their manner, suggest improvisations to him.

But, after all, the speaker who possesses the real oratorical gift always feels himself more or less hampered by screen pictures. He cannot develop his subject with them as he could without them. He knows well that he could give far more graphic and far truer impressions by painting the scenes solely on the screen of his hearers' imagination than he can when half their attention is distracted by the panorama passing before them—a panorama which lacks the atmosphere of the actual scenes, and which at the same time suggests as many different ideas and impressions as there are different pairs of eyes in the audience. Not many years ago there was a celebrated and very capable lecturer on historical subjects, famous all over the United States, who, tempted by the popularity of "illustrated lectures" or misled by a manager, tried the plan of showing pictures with his discourses. But he quickly abandoned it. The lecturer was too full of ideas, and the pictures too full of distraction, to make a successful combination.

It remains to give one or two more practical hints. If you have occasion to make a quotation, poetical or other, give it correctly if you can; but do not be disturbed if you get it wrong. Only in rare cases seek to correct it. Provided

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that you give its sense and spirit, though you haggle the words, the chances are that few in the audience will know it any better than you do, and those few will bear you no ill-will.

In your enunciation be particularly careful to bring out the sounds of the consonants; the vowels, if your voice is fairly well trained, will take care of themselves. Persons suffering from imperfect hearing find their greatest difficulty in distinguishing words containing the same vowels but different consonants.

Beware of employing too many adjectives; husband your store of them, and make those that you do use tell. An adjective is apt to appear more conspicuous in speech than in print, and if the same one is frequently used in a single discourse it will lose its effectiveness. There are certain adjectives which should not be employed more than once, or at the most twice, in a speech, while others may be used much more frequently without loss of power. "Beautiful," for instance, may be employed several times, even many times, but not "enchanting"; "great," but not "stupendous"; "wonderful" (though not too frequently), but not "marvelous" or "prodigious." Practised judgment will guide you.

Avoid, with great care, falling into the habit of a whining, sing-song such as may, unfortunately, be heard from many preachers. It is the timbre of "cant," and no audience will long endure it.

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If you should be troubled with hoarseness, do not drink water, unless it be sugared water, which you may take moderately. A small emollient "troche," or a pellet of borax, slowly dissolved in the mouth, is often effective. In our catarrhal climate the nasal passages are often so obstructed as to destroy the resonance of the voice. A good prophylactic for this trouble is a douche of salted, tepid water, used an hour or two before speaking.

A cup of strong coffee or tea taken an hour or half an hour before going on the platform is an excellent stimulant with some temperaments.

IV

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IN addition to the illustrative examples that we have already employed, it seems advisable to collect here, at the end, a number of others, chosen from the utterances of celebrated orators, and which may serve as models of style for young speakers. Such models, as we have said before, should never be directly imitated; but the study of them possesses the same kind of educational value as the study of models of literary excellence has for the writer.

One thing, however, is necessarily lacking—the action of the speaker. Reading his words in print can convey but little suggestion of the manner in which he said them, or of the momentary significance which he was able to put into his utterances. Sometimes one can catch, through the words, a glimpse of the orator in action, especially if one knows something of the history of the times when the speech was made and of the special circumstances attending its delivery. But, in general, the report of a speech, read long after it was made, is like a specimen in a museum—the form is there, but the life is

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gone. Many orations which produced an immense effect upon the hearers lie inert on the printed page, and the reader finds it difficult to believe that they could ever have exercised the magic power ascribed to them. Hundreds of celebrated speeches have been perused for the purpose of selecting the examples that are here given, and hardly one in twenty has been found to possess the peculiar qualities which enable it to retain in print a decided suggestion of its original force as it fell from the orator's lips.

In presenting these examples no attempt at chronological order is made, but each is prefaced or followed by such explanatory remarks and comments as seem appropriate or desirable.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

*(From his speech in reply to Stephen A. Douglas at Chicago,
July 10, 1858.)*

"Now, it happens that we meet together once every year, somewhere about the 4th of July, for some reason or other. These 4th of July gatherings, I suppose, have their uses. If you will indulge me, I will state what I suppose to be some of them.

"We are now a mighty nation; we are thirty, or about thirty, millions of people, and we own and inhabit about one-fifteenth part of the dry land of the whole earth. We run our memory back over the pages of history for about eighty-two years, and we discover that we were then a very small people in point of numbers, vastly inferior to what we are now,

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with a vastly less extent of country, with vastly less of everything we deem desirable among men. We look upon the change as exceedingly advantageous to us and to our posterity, and we fix upon something that happened away back as being in some way or other connected with this rise of prosperity. We find a race of men living in that day whom we claim as our fathers and grandfathers.

"They were iron men; they *fought* for the principle that they contended for—and we understand that through what they then did the degree of prosperity that we now enjoy has come to us. We hold this annual celebration to remind ourselves of all the good done in this process of time; of how it was done, and who did it; how we are historically connected with it: and we go from these meetings in better humor with ourselves; we feel more attached the one to the other, and more firmly bound to the country we inhabit. In every way we are better men, in the age and race and country in which we live, for these celebrations. But after we have done all this we have not yet reached the whole. There is something else connected with it.

"We have among us, besides these men descended by blood from our ancestors, perhaps half our people who are *not* their descendants at all; they are men who have come from Europe—German, Irish, French, and Scandinavian—men that have come from Europe themselves, or whose ancestors have come hither and settled here, finding themselves our equal in all things. If *they* look back through this history, to trace their connection with those days by blood, they find they have none. They cannot carry themselves back into that glorious epoch and make themselves

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feel that they are part of us; but when they look through the Declaration of Independence they find that those old men say, 'We hold this truth to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,' and *then* they feel that that moral sentiment, taught in that day, evidences their relation to those men; that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have the right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration—and so they are! That is the electric cord in the Declaration that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together; that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world."

The chief thing to be noted in this specimen of Mr. Lincoln's style is the extreme simplicity of the language, bordering on the colloquial at times, yet always dignified, and, though occasionally somewhat diffuse, pellucid as a mountain brook, and rigidly logical in the arrangement and development of the thought. The reader must remember the occasion of the speech in order to appreciate the orator's insistence on the principle of the equality of men; Mr. Lincoln was battling against the extension of slavery and for its ultimate extinction.

We add Mr. Lincoln's inaugural address, March 4, 1865, which, though upon the whole less finished, may, as an example of pure eloquence, even outrank the famous Gettysburg

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speech, so often reprinted. This brief address, from the close of the first paragraph, begins to attain heights seldom reached by any speaker, and perhaps never exceeded:

“Fellow countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

“On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war, seeking to dissolve the Union and divide its effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

“One-eighth of the whole population were colored

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slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed the right to do no more than to resist the territorial enlargement of it.

“Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astonishing.

“Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces—but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully.

“The Almighty has His own purposes. ‘Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.’ If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a

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living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as it was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan; to do all that which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

JOHN BRIGHT

(From a speech at Birmingham, December 18, 1862, when feeling in England was running strong against the North.)

"I do not blame any man here who thinks the cause of the North hopeless and the restoration of the Union impossible. It may be hopeless; the restoration may be impossible. You have the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Mr. Gladstone] on that point. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a speaker, is not surpassed by any man in England, and he is a great statesman. He believes the cause of the North to be hopeless; that their enterprise cannot succeed. Well, he is quite welcome to that opinion, and so is anybody else. I do not hold that opinion; but the facts are before

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us all, and, as far as we can discard passion and sympathy, we are all equally at liberty to form our own opinion. But what I do blame is this: I blame men who are eager to admit into the family of nations a State which offers itself to us based upon a principle, I will undertake to say, more odious and more blasphemous than was ever heretofore dreamed of in Christian or pagan, in civilized or in savage times. The leaders of this revolt propose this monstrous thing—that over a territory forty times as large as England the blight and curse of slavery shall be forever perpetuated!

“I cannot believe, for my part, that such a fate will befall that fair land, stricken though it now is with the ravages of war. I cannot believe that civilization, in its journey with the sun, will sink into endless night in order to gratify the ambition of the leaders in this revolt who seek to

‘Wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.’

I have another and a far brighter vision before my gaze. It may be but a vision, but I will cherish it. I see one vast confederation stretching from the frozen North in unbroken line to the glowing South, and from the wild billows of the Atlantic westward to the calmer waters of the Pacific main—and I see one people and one language and one law and one faith; and, over all the wide continent, the home of freedom and a refuge for the oppressed of every race and of every clime.”

Here we see a curiously effective blending of sarcasm with a resistless appeal to the deepest

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sentiments of humanity, leading on to a declamatory peroration of great power and beauty. Mr. Bright's mind was very imaginative, and frequently expressed itself in splendid images. The most famous of these occurred in a speech in the House of Commons, in which he pleaded for the cessation of the Crimean War.

"I cannot but notice, in speaking to gentlemen who sit on either side of this House or in speaking to any one I meet, between this House and any of the localities we frequent when this House is up—I cannot, I say, but notice that an uneasy feeling exists as to the news which may arrive by the very next mail from the East. I do not suppose that your troops are to be beaten in actual conflict with the foe, or that they will be driven into the sea; but I am certain that many homes in England in which there now exists a fond hope that the distant one may return—many such homes may be rendered desolate when the next mail shall arrive. The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land—you may almost hear the beating of his wings! There is no one, as when the first-born were slain of old, to sprinkle with blood the lintel and the two side-posts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on. He takes his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor and lowly, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal."

The effect produced upon the minds of the hearers by the image of "the Angel of Death"

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is said to have been overwhelming. Mr. Bright himself declared, afterward, that he was surprised at it. He told his sister that the idea had come to him while he was lying in bed in the morning thinking of his speech and of the calamities which the war had caused. The idea of the angel suddenly flashed upon him, but he thought no more about it until it came back to him while he was speaking. This is exactly accordant with what we have said about the desirability of leaving such things, if they occur in advance, to take shape in the mind and upon the lips during the delivery of the speech; then they have the tenfold power that comes from spontaneity.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

(From his speech at Liverpool, October 16, 1863.)

An organized attempt was made by Southern sympathizers, who composed a large part of the audience, to prevent Mr. Beecher from being heard, and the utmost disorder prevailed. It was a long time before he could get a hearing even for his opening words. At last he began as follows:

“For more than twenty-five years I have been made perfectly familiar with popular assemblies in all parts of my country except the extreme South. There has not, for the whole of that time, been a single day of my life when it would have been safe for me to go south of Mason and Dixon’s Line, in my own country; and all for one reason—my solemn, earnest, persistent testimony against that which I

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consider to be the most atrocious thing under the sun, the system of American slavery in a great, free republic. [Cheers.] I have passed through that early period when right of free speech was denied to me. Again and again I have attempted to address audiences that, for no other crime than that of free speech, visited me with all manner of contumelious epithets; and now, since I have been in England, although I have met with greater kindness and courtesy on the part of most than I deserve, yet, on the other hand, I perceive that the Southern influence prevails to some extent in England. [Applause and uproar.] It is my old acquaintance; I understand it perfectly. [Laughter.] And I have always held it to be an unfailing truth that where a man had a cause that would bear examination he was perfectly willing to have it spoken about. [Applause.] And when in Manchester I saw those huge red placards, 'Who is Henry Ward Beecher' [laughter and applause]; and when in Liverpool I was told that there were those blood-red placards purporting to say what Henry Ward Beecher had said, and calling upon Englishmen to suppress free speech—I tell you what I thought. I thought simply this: 'I am glad of it!' [Laughter.] Why? Because if they had felt perfectly secure that *you* are the minions of the South and the slaves of slavery, they would have kept perfectly still. [Applause and uproar.] And therefore when I saw so much nervous apprehension that, if I were permitted to speak [hisses and applause]—when I found they were afraid to have me speak [hisses, laughter, and 'no,' 'no']—when I found that they considered my speaking damaging to their cause [applause], when I found that they appealed from

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facts and reasoning to mob law [applause and uproar], I said, 'No man need tell me what the heart and counsel of these men are—they tremble and are afraid!' [Applause, hisses, laughter, 'no,' 'no.'] Now, personally it is a matter of very little consequence to me whether I speak here to-night or not. [Laughter and cheers.] But one thing is very certain; if you do permit me to speak here to-night you will hear very plain talking. [Applause and hissing.] You will not find a man that dared to speak about Great Britain three thousand miles off and then is afraid to speak to Great Britain when he stands on her shores. [Immense applause and hisses.] And if I do not mistake the tone and temper of Englishmen, they had rather have a man who opposes them in a manly way [applause] than a sneak that agrees with them in an unmanly way. [Applause and 'bravo.'] Now, if I can carry you with me by sound convictions, I shall be immensely glad [applause]; but if I cannot carry you with me by facts and sound arguments, I do not wish you to go with me at all—and all that I ask is simply *fair play*. [Applause, and voice, 'You shall have it, too.']

This is enough to indicate the method that Mr. Beecher employed in his endeavor to ride down the opposition and obtain a hearing for his cause. The contest lasted during three hours, the speaker fencing with the disturbers, spearing them with wit, spurning them with sarcasm and irony, occasionally touching them, in spite of themselves, with an appeal to their patriotic pride or their love of fair play, and

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managing, at last, to get his argument before the minds of the better-disposed portion of the audience.

HENRY W. GRADY

(From his address at the New England Society dinner in New York, December 22, 1886.)

"In speaking to the toast with which you have honored me, I accept the term, 'The New South,' as in no sense disparaging to the Old. Dear to me, sir, are the home of my childhood and the traditions of my people. I would not, if I could, dim the glory they won in peace and war, or by word or deed take aught from the splendor and grace of their civilization—never equaled, and perhaps never to be equaled, in its chivalric strength and grace. There is a New South, not through protest against the Old, but because of new conditions, new adjustments, and, if you please, new ideas and aspirations. It is to this that I address myself. . . . Dr. Talmage has drawn for you with a master's hand the picture of your returning armies. He has told you how, in the pomp and circumstances of war, they came back to you, marching with proud, victorious tread, reading their glory in a nation's eyes! Will you bear with me while I tell you of *another* army that sought its home at the close of the late war—an army that marched home in defeat, and not in victory; in pathos, and not in splendor; but in glory that equaled yours, and to hearts as loving as ever welcomed heroes home. Let *me* picture to you the foot-sore Confederate soldier, as, buttoning up in his faded gray jacket the parole, which was to bear testimony to his children of his

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fidelity and faith, he turned his face southward from Appomattox in April, 1865. Think of him as ragged, half-starved, heavy-hearted, enfeebled by wounds and exhaustion—having fought to exhaustion—he surrenders his gun, wrings the hands of his comrades in silence, and, lifting his tear-stained and pallid face for the last time to the graves that dot the old Virginia hills, pulls his gray cap over his brow and begins the slow and painful journey.

“What does *he* find, let me ask you, who went to your homes eager to receive, in the welcome you had justly earned, full payment for your four years’ sacrifice—what does *he* find when, having followed the battle-stained cross against overwhelming odds, dreading death not half so much as surrender, he reaches the home he left so prosperous and beautiful? He finds his house in ruins, his farm devastated, his slaves free, his stock killed, his barns empty, his trade destroyed, his money worthless, his social system, feudal in its magnificence, swept away, his people without law or legal status, his comrades slain, and the burdens of others heavy on his shoulders. . . . What does he *do*—this hero in gray, with heart of gold? Does he sit down in sullenness and despair? Not for a day! Surely God, who had stripped him of his prosperity, inspired him in his adversity. As ruin was never before so overwhelming, never was restoration swifter. The soldier stepped from the trenches into the furrow; horses that had charged Federal guns marched before the plow, and fields that ran red with human blood in April were green with the harvest in June. Women reared in luxury cut up their dresses and made breeches for their husbands, and, with a patience and

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heroism that fit women always as a garment, gave their hands to work. Cheerfulness and frankness prevailed. 'Bill Arp' struck the keynote when he said, 'Well, I killed as many of them as they did of me, and now I am going to work.' [Laughter and applause.] . . . I want to say to General Sherman—who is considered an able man in our parts, though some people think he is a kind of careless man about fire—that from the ashes he left us in 1864 we have raised a brave and beautiful city; that, somehow or other, we have caught the sunshine in the bricks and mortar of our homes, and have builded therein not one ignoble prejudice or memory. . . .

"This is said in no spirit of time-serving or apology. The South believes that the late struggle between the States was war, and not rebellion, revolution, and not conspiracy, and that her convictions were as honest as yours. I should be unjust to the dauntless spirit of the South, and to my own convictions, if I did not make this plain in this presence. The South has nothing to take back. In my native town of Athens is a monument that crowns its central hill—a plain white shaft. Deep-cut into its shining side is a name dear to me above the names of men; that of a brave and simple man who died in brave and simple faith. Not for all the glories of New England, from Plymouth Rock all the way, would I exchange the heritage he left me in his soldier's death. But, sir, speaking from the shadow of that memory, which I honor as nothing else on earth, I say that the cause in which he suffered and for which he gave his life was adjudged by higher and fuller wisdom than his or mine, and I am glad that the omniscient God held the balance of battle in His almighty hand, and that human slavery

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was swept forever from American soil—the American Union saved from the wreck of war.”

This address produced a powerful effect upon the audience, but when it is read in print it suggests, perhaps, a slight overdwelling upon the emotional chord, recalling the surcharged pathos of some of Dickens’s death scenes. With all its phrasal beauty, it is not a model to be frequently or closely followed.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

*(From his address in New York on “The State of the Country,”
May 11, 1863.)*

An example of the florid style of peroration, in which Mr. Phillips sometimes indulged, but which should be undertaken only by a master. The relief of Lucknow during the great mutiny in India, to which the orator referred, had occurred in 1858, and must have been sufficiently fresh in the minds of many of his hearers.

“Never until we welcome the negro, the foreigner, all races as equals, and, melted together, hurl them all at despotism, will the North deserve triumph or earn it at the hands of a just God. But the North will triumph. I *hear* it. Do you remember in that disastrous siege in India when the Scotch girl raised her head from the pallet of the hospital and said to the sickening hearts of the English, ‘I hear the bagpipes,—the Campbells are coming!’ and they said, ‘Jessie, it is delirium.’ ‘No! I know it; I hear it afar off!’ And in an hour the pibroch burst upon their glad ears, and the banner of England floated in triumph over their heads. So *I* hear in the dim dis-

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tance the first notes of the jubilee rising from the hearts of the millions. Soon, very soon, you shall hear it at the gates of the citadel, and the stars and stripes shall guarantee liberty forever from the Lakes to the Gulf."

Mr. Phillips, so noted for the urbanity of his manner and the restraint of his vocal expression, was terrible and often very unjust in his invective, which all of his hearers agreed gained immensely in effect from the cold, placid tone in which it was spoken. In his lecture on "Idols" he made a famous onslaught on Rufus Choate, because of the position taken by the latter on the anti-slavery question. We quote it simply as an example of the intensity of bitterness which Mr. Phillips could impart to an utterance of this kind:

"This is the model which Massachusetts offers to the Pantheon of the great jurists of the world! Suppose we stood in that lofty temple of jurisprudence, on either side of us the statues of the great lawyers of every age and clime, and let us see what part New England—Puritan, educated, free New England—would bear in the pageant. Rome points to a colossal figure and says: 'That is Papinian, who, when the emperor Caracalla murdered his own brother and ordered the lawyer to defend the deed, went cheerfully to death rather than sully his lips with the atrocious plea; and that is Ulpian, who, aiding his prince to put the army below the law, was massacred at the foot of a weak but virtuous throne!'

"France stretches forth her grateful hands, crying:

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‘That is D’Aguesseau, worthy, when he went to face an enraged king, of the farewell his wife addressed to him, “Go! forget that you have a wife and children to ruin, and remember only that you have France to save.”’

“England says: ‘That is Coke, who flung the laurels of eighty years in the face of the first Stuart, in defense of the people. This is Selden, on every book of whose library you saw written, “Before everything, Liberty.” That is Mansfield, silver-tongued, who proclaimed:

“Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free.”

This is Romilly, who spent life trying to make law synonymous with justice, and succeeded in making life and property safer in every city of the empire. And that is Erskine, whose eloquence, spite of Lord Eldon and George III., made it safe to speak and print.’

“Then, New England shouts, ‘This is Choate, who made it safe to murder, and of whose health thieves asked before they began to steal!’”

To show Mr. Phillips in a more amiable mood we may quote a famous passage from his lecture on “The Lost Arts,” which was the gem of every lecture course whose managers succeeded in booking it during the classic days of the American Lyceum. This passage is noteworthy as a model of the art of putting things:

“There is one story, which² it is said Washington told, of a man who went into an inn and asked for a glass of drink from the landlord, who pushed forward

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a wine-glass about half the usual size. The landlord said, 'That glass out of which you are drinking is forty years old.' 'Well,' said the thirsty traveler, contemplating its diminutive proportions, 'I think it is the smallest thing of its age I ever saw.' That story was told in Athens three hundred and seventy-five years before Christ was born. Why, all these Irish bulls are Greek, every one of them! Take the Irishman who carried round a brick as a specimen of the house he had to sell; take the Irishman who shut his eyes and looked into a glass to see how he would look when he was dead; take the Irishman that bought a crow, alleging that crows were reported to live two hundred years and he meant to set out and try it; take the Irishman who met a friend who said to him, 'Why, sir, I heard you were dead.' 'Well,' says the man, 'I suppose you see I'm not.' 'Oh, no,' says he, 'I'd believe the man who told me a good deal quicker than I would you.' Well, those are all Greek. A score or more of a parallel character come from Athens."

In quickly enchainning the attention of his audience, in catching the salient points of his discourse and throwing them vividly, succinctly, unforgetably before the minds of his hearers; in awaking their sympathies by apt appeals, picturesque details, anecdotes, and comparisons, no orator has ever excelled Mr. Phillips, if any in modern times has even equaled him. Take these passages from his favorite lecture on Toussaint L'Ouverture:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have been requested to offer you a sketch of one of the most remarkable men

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of the last generation—the great San Domingo chief, Toussaint L'Ouverture, an unmixed negro, with no drop of white blood in his veins. My sketch is at once a biography and an argument; a biography, of course very brief, of a negro soldier and statesman, which I offer you as an argument in behalf of the race from which he sprang. I am about to compare and weigh races—indeed, I am engaged to-night in what you will think the absurd effort to convince you that the negro race, instead of being that object of pity or contempt which we usually consider it, is entitled, judged by the facts of history, to a place close by the side of the Saxon.

“Now, races love to be judged in two ways—by the great men they produce and by the average merit of the mass of the race. We Saxons are proud of Bacon, Shakespeare, Hampden, Washington, Franklin, the stars we have lent to the galaxy of history; and then we turn, with equal pride, to the average merit of Saxon blood since it streamed from its German home. So, again, there are three tests by which races love to be tried. The first, the basis of all, is courage—the element which says here and to-day [this lecture was delivered at the beginning of the war], ‘This continent is mine from the Lakes to the Gulf; let him beware who seeks to divide it!’ And the second is the recognition that force is doubled by purpose—liberty regulated by law is the secret of Saxon progress. And the third element is persistency, endurance; first a purpose, then death or success. . . .

“Let me add another thing. If I stood here to-night to tell the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language

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rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I here to tell the story of Washington I should take it from your hearts, you who think no marble white enough to carve the name of the Father of his Country. I am about to tell you the story of a negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards—men who despised him as a negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in many a battle. All the materials for *his* biography are from the lips of his enemies. . . .

“Cromwell never saw an army until he was forty; this man *never saw a soldier* until he was fifty! Cromwell manufactured his army out of what? Englishmen, the best blood in Europe; out of the middle class of Englishmen, the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered what? Englishmen, their equals. This man manufactured *his* army out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to one another. Yet out of this mixed and, as you say, despicable mass he forged a thunderbolt; and hurled it at what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica! If Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier! I know it was a small territory; it was not as large as the continent; but it was as large as that Attica which,

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with Athens for a capital, has filled the earth with its fame for two thousand years. We measure genius by quality, not by quantity.” ●

That is worth, as a lesson in true oratory, more than all the elaborate periods that Edward Everett culled from his polished pen and wound off the smooth reel of his faultless memory, with the ornate graces of an elocution in which no tone or gesture was allowed to spring, free-born, from the heart of the speaker.

WILLIAM PITT—(The First Lord Chatham)

(From his impromptu speech on the American war, November 18, 1777.)

Lord Suffolk had defended the employment of Indians against the colonists, saying that the government had the right to use all means that “God and nature put into its hands.”

“I am astonished, shocked, to hear such principles confessed—to hear them avowed in this House or in this country; principles equally unconstitutional, inhuman, and unchristian. . . . These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend bench, those holy ministers of the gospel, and pious pastors of our church; I conjure them to join in the holy work and vindicate the religion of their God. I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this learned bench to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character.

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I invoke the genius of the constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain he led your victorious fleets against the boasted armada of Spain; in vain he defended and established the honor, the liberties, the religion of this country against the arbitrary cruelties of popery and the inquisition, if these more than popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are let loose among us; to turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connections, friends, and relations, the merciless cannibal, thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child!—to send forth the infidel savage—against whom? Against your Protestant brethren; to lay waste their country; to desolate their dwellings; and to extirpate their race and name, with these horrible hell-hounds of savage war—*hell-hounds, I say, of savage war!* Spain armed herself with bloodhounds to extirpate the wretched natives of America, and we improve even on the inhuman example of Spanish cruelty! . . .

“My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept in my bed this night, nor reposed my head on my pillow, without giving vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles.”

One would have thought that no one could have resisted such an appeal: but history tells us that it was resisted, and that Chatham’s eloquence failed.

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EDMUND BURKE

(From his speech on Conciliation with America, March 22, 1775.)

“Sir, I think you must perceive that I am resolved this day to have nothing at all to do with the question of the right of taxation. Some gentlemen may startle—but it is true—I put it totally out of the question. It is less than nothing in my consideration. I do not, indeed, wonder, nor will you, sir, that gentlemen of profound learning are fond of displaying it on this profound subject. But my consideration is narrow, confined, and wholly limited to the policy of the question. I do not examine whether the giving away of a man’s money be a power excepted and reserved out of the general trust of government, or how far all mankind, in all forms of polity, are entitled to an exercise of that right by the charter of nature; or whether, on the contrary, a right of taxation is necessarily involved in the general principle of legislation, and inseparable from the ordinary supreme power. These are deep questions, where great names militate against each other, where reason is perplexed; and an appeal to authorities only thickens the confusion. For high and reverend authorities lift up their heads on both sides, and there is no sure footing in the middle. This point is the

‘ . . . great Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk.’

“I do not intend to be overwhelmed in that bog, though in such respectable company. The question with me is, not whether you have a *right* to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your *interest*

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to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I *may* do, but what humanity, reason, and justice tell me I *ought* to do. Is a politic act the worse for being a generous one? Is no concession proper but that which is made from your want of right to keep what you grant? Or, does it lessen the grace or dignity of relaxing in the exercise of an odious claim because you have your evidence-room full of titles and your magazines stuffed with arms to enforce them? What signify all those titles and all those arms? Of what avail are they when the reason of the thing tells me that the assertion of my title is the loss of my suit; and that I could do nothing but wound myself by the use of my own weapons?"

This is a remarkable exhibition, first, of the power of clear, succinct statement; and, secondly, of the use of "the method of rhetorical question" to drive home an argument. And through it all there plays, half concealed, the glittering blade of irony.

FISHER AMES

(From his speech in the debate, in Congress, on the Jay Treaty, April 28, 1796.)

Mr. Ames, who had a great reputation as an orator, was pale and feeble from a disease which finally caused his death, and this circumstance added force to the appeal which he made that his country be spared the horrors of war. All historians agree that this was one of the greatest orations ever delivered in the United States.

Among the immediate evils to flow from a rejection of the treaty, in addition to the confusion into which it would throw the government, the

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speaker included the probability of an outbreak of Indian hostilities:

“On this theme my emotions are unutterable! If I could find words for them, if my powers bore any proportion to my zeal, I would swell my voice to such a note of remonstrance that it should reach every log house beyond the mountains. I would say to the inhabitants, ‘Wake from your false security! Your cruel dangers, your more cruel apprehensions, are soon to be renewed. The wounds yet unhealed are to be torn open again. In the daytime your path through the woods will be ambushed; the darkness of midnight will glitter with the blaze of your dwellings. You are a father; the blood of your sons shall fatten your corn-field. You are a mother; the war-whoop shall waken the sleep of the cradle.’ . . .

“When I come to the moment of deciding the vote I start back with dread from the edge of the pit into which we are plunging. In my view even the minutes I have spent in expostulation have their value—because they protract the crisis and the short period in which alone we may resolve to escape it. Yet I have perhaps as little personal interest in the event as any one here. There is, I believe, no member who will not think his chance to be a witness of the consequences greater than mine. If, however, the vote should pass to reject, and a spirit should rise, as it will, with the public disorders, to make confusion worse confounded, even I, slender and almost broken as my hold on life is, may outlive the government and Constitution of my country!”

The speech was very long, and no adequate representation of its argument can be given in

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brief extracts. Hildreth in his history preserves a letter written by Vice-President Adams, who heard the speech from the gallery, to his wife, giving a most graphic account of the scene.

"Judge Iredell and I happened to sit together [wrote Mr. Adams]. Our feelings beat in unison. 'My God! how great he is!' says Iredell—'how great he has been!' 'Noble!' said I. After some time Iredell breaks out, 'Bless my stars, I never heard anything so great since I was born.' 'Divine!' said I. And thus we went on with our interjections, not to say tears, to the end. Tears enough were shed. Not a dry eye, I believe, in the House, except some of the jackasses who had occasioned the necessity of the oratory. These attempted to laugh, but their visages grinned horribly ghastly smiles. They smiled like Foulon's son-in-law when they made him kiss his father's dead and bleeding head. The situation of the man excited compassion and interested all hearts in his favor. The ladies wished his soul had a better body."

RED JACKET (Sagoyewatha)

It need not cause surprise that the oratory of the Indians should be found offering models of eloquence for the admiration of even the most cultivated white men, for the red men were wonderfully endowed with imagination and poetic insight, and some of their orators might rank with the best of any age. By general consent the Iroquois chief, Red Jacket, has been re-

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garded as the Indian Demosthenes. He lived until 1830, reaching the age of seventy-eight years. When Lafayette visited this country in 1825, Red Jacket, who had met him at Fort Stanwix in 1787, went to visit him at Niagara Falls; and Minnie Myrtle, in her book on *The Iroquois*, tells this story of their conversation:

“General Lafayette remarked that time had wrought great changes upon both since their first meeting. ‘But,’ rejoined Red Jacket, ‘he has not been so severe with you as with me. He has left you a fresh countenance, and hair to cover your head, while to me—behold!’ and taking the covering from his head he disclosed that he was nearly bald. But Lafayette did not leave him to think thus harshly of time, but proved to him that the ravages had been nearly the same upon both by removing a wig and exposing a head almost as bald as the chief’s; upon which the latter remarked, with much pleasantry, that a scalp from some bystander would renew his youth in the same manner.”

Red Jacket declared that he “was born an orator.” Even what he said on his death-bed was cast in the oratorical mold:

“When I am dead it will be noised abroad through all the world; they will hear it across the great waters, and say, ‘Red Jacket, the great orator, is dead.’ And white men will come and ask you for my body. They will wish to bury me. But do not let them take me. Clothe me in my simplest dress, put on my leggings and moccasins, and hang the cross

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which I have worn so long around my neck, and let it lie on my bosom. Then, bury me among my people. Neither do I wish to be buried with pagan rites. I wish the ceremonies to be as you like, according to the customs of your new religion, if you choose. [His wife had been converted to Christianity.] Your minister says the dead will rise. Perhaps they will. If they do I wish to rise with my old comrades. I do not wish to rise among pale-faces; I wish to be surrounded by red men. Do not make a feast according to the customs of the Indians. Whenever my friends chose they could come and feast with me when I was well, and I do not wish those who have never eaten with me in my cabin to surfeit at my funeral feast."

He once said in a speech, referring to the wasting away of his people before the advance of the white men:

"We are a small island in the bosom of the great waters. We are encircled; we are encompassed. The evil spirit rides upon the blast, and the waters are disturbed. They rise, they press upon us; and the waves once settled over us we disappear forever. Who, then, lives to mourn us? None! What marks our extermination? Nothing! We are mingled with the common elements."

On another occasion he said, addressing the whites:

"We first knew you a feeble plant, which wanted a little earth whereon to dwell. We gave it you—and afterward, when we could have trodden you

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under our feet, we watered and protected you. And now you have grown to be a mighty tree, whose top reaches the clouds and whose branches overspread the whole land; whilst we, who were the tall pine of the forest, have become a feeble plant and need your protection."

The poetic beauty of his thoughts inspired the words of his interpreters. One who heard him in council said:

"I shall never forget the impression made upon me. The English language has no figures to convey the true meaning of the original, but, coming through the medium of an illiterate interpreter, I saw the dismembered parts of a splendid oration."

A feature always to be remarked in Indian oratory is the directness of the address to the personality of the hearers. The absence of abstract discussion arose in part from the untutored state of the Indian mind, but the natural understanding of such a person as Red Jacket was as keen and powerful as that of any white man; and the habit of personifying ideas and speaking in tropes and images gave picturesqueness to his utterances. Comparable in imaginative power with speeches of Red Jacket are some of the utterances of other famous Indian orators, such as Shenando's:

"I am an aged hemlock. The winds of a hundred winters have whistled through my branches. I am

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dead at the top. The generation to which I belonged have all fallen, and I am left swaying alone."

Or Logan's:

"There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one!"

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

(From his lecture on "Shakespeare," generally regarded as his best lyceum performance.)

"He exceeded all the sons of men in the splendor of his imagination. To him the whole world paid tribute, and nature poured out her treasures at his feet. In him all races lived again, and even those to be were pictured in his brain.

"He was a man of imagination—that is to say, of genius, and, having seen a leaf and a drop of water, he could construct the forests, the rivers, and the seas. In his presence all the cataracts fall and foam, the mists rise, the clouds form and float.

"If Shakespeare knew one fact, he knew its kindred and its neighbors. Looking at a coat of mail, he instantly imagined the society, the conditions, that produced it, and what it, in turn, produced. . . .

"He lived the life of all.

"He was a citizen of Athens in the days of Pericles. He listened to the eager eloquence of the great orators, and sat upon the cliffs, and, with the tragic poet, heard, 'the multitudinous laughter of the sea.' . . .

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"He lived by the mysterious Nile, amid the vast and monstrous. He knew the very thought that wrought the form and features of the Sphinx. He heard great Memnon's morning song when his marble lips were smitten by the sun. He laid him down with the embalmed and waiting dead, and felt within their dust the expectation of another life, mingled with cold and suffocating doubts—the children born of long delay.

"He walked the ways of mighty Rome, and saw great Cæsar with his legions in the field. He stood with vast and motley throngs and watched the triumphs given to victorious men, followed by uncrowned kings, the captured hosts, and all the spoils of ruthless war. . . .

"He lived the life of savage men. He trod the forests' silent depths, and in the desperate game of life or death he matched his thought against the instinct of the beast.

"He knew all crimes and all regrets; all virtues and their rich rewards. He was victim and victor, pursuer and pursued, outcast and king. He heard the applause and curses of the world, and on his heart had fallen all the nights and noons of failure and success. . . .

"The imagination had a stage in Shakespeare's brain whereon were set all scenes that lie between the morn of laughter and the night of tears; and where all his players bodied forth the false and true, the joys and griefs, the careless shallows and the tragic deeps of universal life."

Notwithstanding their exaggeration and their flights of fanciful rhetoric, such sentences, com-

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ing from a speaker of Ingersoll's charm of voice and manner, had the effect of a strange music which fascinated every hearer. The essence of the style is best described by Mr. Hudson Maxim's new word, "potentry," which he defines in his *Science of Poetry* as "that property of speech which renders it more than usually powerful, sensuous, impressive, or sublime. . . . Whenever a long, mouth-filling, and sonorous word or phrase is used in place of a shorter synonym, such as 'a stupendous edifice' for 'a big house,' that is potentry."

RUFUS CHOATE

(From his eulogy of Webster at Dartmouth College, July 27, 1853.)

"We are among the scenes where the youth of Webster awoke first, and fully, to the life of the mind. We stand, as it were, at the sources, physical, social, moral, and intellectual, of that exceeding greatness. Some now here saw that youth—almost it was yours *Nilum parvum videre*. Some—one of his instructors certainly; some possibly of his classmates or nearest college friends; some of the books he read; some of the apartments in which he studied—are here.

"We can almost call up from their habitations in the past, or in the fancy, the whole spiritual circle which environed that time of his life; the opinions he had embraced; the theories of mind, of religion, of morals, of philosophy, to which he had surrendered himself; the canons of taste and criticism which he had accepted; the great authors whom he loved

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best; the trophies which had begun to disturb his sleep; the facts of history which he had learned, believed, and begun to interpret; the shapes of hope and fear in which imagination began to bring before him the good and evil of the future.

“Still the same outward world is around you and above you. The sweet and solemn flow of the river, gleaming through intervals here and there; margins and samples of the same old woods, but thinned and retiring; the same range of green hills yonder, tolerant of culture to the top, but shaded then by primeval forests, on whose crests the last rays of sunset lingered; the summit of Ascutney; the great northern light that never sets; the constellations that walk around and watch the pole—the same nature, undecayed, unchanging, is here.”

There is a scholarly quality, a calm beauty of phraseology, a wealth and splendor of studied diction here which charms the cultivated mind more than any amount of picturesque and overstrained imagery or declamatory exaggeration could possibly do. And yet Mr. Choate was capable of outbursts which swept juries away and turned the heads of judges with their emotional power.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

(From his “Sir Philip Sidney,” one of the most popular of his lectures, delivered many times, from many platforms.)

“While he loitered at court, beating all the courtiers with their own weapons, in wit, in riding, in

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games, at tournaments, the tales of American discovery shed a wondrous glamour upon the new continent. Nothing was too beautiful for belief, and the fiery feet of youth burned the English soil with eagerness to tread the unutterable tropics. Francis Drake sailed from Plymouth to follow Magellan around the world, and he went in a manner consonant with the popular fancy of the countless riches that awarded such adventures. His cooking-vessels were of silver; his table plate of exquisite workmanship. The Queen knighted him, gave him a sword, and said, 'Whoever striketh at you, Drake, striketh at us.' A band of musicians accompanied the fleet, and the English sailor went to circumnavigate the globe with the same nonchalant magnificence with which in other days the gorgeous Alcibiades, with flutes and soft recorders blowing under silken sails, came idling home from victory.

"Philip Sidney, his heart alive to romance and longing to be his companion, saw him sail away. But he turned and saw the black Italian spider, whose sting he had seen on Bartholomew's Eve in Paris, still weaving her stealthy web and seeking to entangle Elizabeth into a match with the Duke of Anjou. The Queen was forty-six, and Mounseer, as the English called him, twenty-three; and while she was coaxing herself to say the most fatal yes that ever woman said—when Burleigh, Leicester, Walsingham, all the safe, sound, conservative old gentlemen and counselors were just ceasing to persuade her—Philip Sidney, a youth of twenty-five, who knew that he had a country as well as a queen, that the hope of that country lay in the triumph of Protestantism, and that to marry Mounseer was to

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abandon that hope, and for the time betray mankind—Philip Sidney, a youth who did not believe that he could not write gravely of sober things because he had written gaily of ladies' eyebrows, knowing as the true-hearted gentleman always knows that to-day it may be a man's turn to sit at a desk in an office, or bend over a book in college, or fashion a horse-shoe at the forge, or toss flowers to some beauty at her window, and to-morrow to stand firm against a cruel church or a desperate court, a brutal snob or an ignorant public opinion—this youth, this immortal gentleman, wrote a letter which dissuaded her from the marriage, and which was as noble a triumph for Protestantism and human liberty as the defeat of the Spanish Armada."

This is an even more admirable example than that quoted above from Mr. Choate, of what may be called literary oratory—*i. e.*, an address written out with great care and exquisite taste, and partly read and partly recited from memory, but presented with so much charm of voice and manner and so perfect a command of the entire art of elocution that, in the case of Mr. Curtis particularly, the auditors were thrilled with admiration, and, but for the presence of the manuscript, which he never pretended to conceal, they might almost have been persuaded to believe that they were listening to an improvisation of the highest order. Yet the literary craftsmanship is very plain.

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RICHARD LALOR SHEIL

(From a speech in defense of the Catholic clergy of Ireland.)

"They are the ministers of a religion endeared by sufferings and fastened by persecution to the affections of their country. There is no variance, no wide gap, between their habits and their inculcations. There are no diamonds in *their* miters, no gold in their croziers. If they are Samaritans in belief, they are not Pharisees in sensibility. They live with the poor, and feel for them. They give them solace in sorrow, food in famine, and medicine in disease—and in the house that reeks with pestilence they take their fearless stand and minister to agony, at the hazard of their lives, its last and most precious consolation.

"If, at the dead of the winter midnight, a knock should come at the door of the Catholic priest, and he should be told that one of those who are committed to his spiritual care lies at the point of death and stands in need of his consolation, does *he* wrap himself in the snugness and warmth of his rectorial sinecureism that he may dream of another benefice? No, he goes forth with a celerity to which genuine piety alone gives wings, and although the rain should fall in torrents on his head and—I do not exaggerate—the snow beat against his face, through many a lonely glen, through many a deep morass, he makes his way. He arrives at the habitation of expiring wretchedness, places himself in perilous contact with the breath that exhales mortality, receives from poisoned lips the secrets of an overburdened heart, converts despair into hope, and wafts that hope to heaven."

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All the gentler touches of Celtic eloquence are to be found in such passages as this.

BOSSUET

(From his funeral oration for Queen Henrietta.)

"It was still destined, then, that I should render this funeral duty to the most high and most puissant princess, Henriette Anne, Duchess of Orleans! She, whom I had seen so attentive while I rendered the same duty to the queen, her mother, was so soon to be the subject of a similar discourse, and *my* sad voice was reserved for this deplorable ministration! O Vanity! O Nothingness! O mortals, ignorant of their destiny! Would she have believed it six months since? And you, would you have thought, while she shed her tears in this place, that she was so soon to re-assemble you here, to weep over her? Princess, worthy object of the admiration of two great kingdoms, was it not enough that England mourned your absence without being yet reduced to mourn your death? And France, which saw you again with so much joy, environed with a new renown—had she no other pomps, no other triumphs, for you on your return from that famous voyage, whence you had brought back so much glory and hopes so fair?

"Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity!" It is the only word which remains to me; it is the only reflection which, in so strange an occurrence, a grief so just and so sensible permits me to use. Neither have I searched the sacred volumes to find in them a text which I could apply to this princess. I have taken without study, and without choice, the first

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words which Ecclesiastes presents to me; in which, although vanity has been so often named, it still appears to me not sufficiently so for the design which I propose to myself. I wish, in a single misfortune, to deplore all the calamities of the human race, and in a single death to show the death and the nothingness of all human grandeurs. This text, which suits all the conditions and all the events of our life, by a particular reason becomes suitable to my unhappy subject. For never have the vanities of the earth been so clearly exposed, so loftily confounded. No, after what we have just seen, health is but a name, life is but a dream, glory is but a phantom, accomplishments and pleasures but dangerous amusements. All is vain in us, except the sincere avowal which we make of our vanities before God, and the settled judgment which makes us despise all that we are.

“But do I speak the truth? Man, whom God has made in His image, is he only a shade? That which Jesus Christ has come from heaven to seek on earth; that which He has thought it no degradation to purchase with all His blood—is it merely a nothing? Let us recognize our error. Doubtless this sad spectacle of human vanities, and the public hope suddenly frustrated by the death of this princess, impelled us too far. Man must not be permitted altogether to despise himself lest, believing with the impious that life is but a game in which hazard reigns, he follow, without rule and without guidance, the will of his blind desires.

“It is therefore that Ecclesiastes, after having commenced his divine work by the words which I have recited; after having filled all its pages with the contempt of human things, wishes at last to show to

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man something more solid, and concludes his whole discourse by saying, 'Fear God, and keep His commandments, for that is the whole man; and know that the Lord will bring into judgment all things that are done, whether good or evil.' Thus all is vain in man if we regard what he gives to the world; but all is important if we consider what he owes to God. Again, all is vain in man if we regard the course of his mortal life; but all is precious, all is important, if we contemplate the term at which it ends and the account which he must render of it. Let us meditate, then, to-day, in sight of this altar and of this tomb, the first and the last words of Ecclesiastes, the one showing the nothingness of man and the other establishing his greatness. Let this tomb convince us of our nothingness, provided that this altar, on which a victim of so great a price is daily offered for us, at the same time instructs us in our dignity."

For a second example of Bossuet's impressive style take this passage from his funeral oration for Michel Le Tellier, High Chancellor of France, who lived to the age of eighty-three years:

"You who, dazzled by the splendors of the world, admire the tranquil course of a life so long and so beautiful, carry higher your thoughts! What, then! eighty-three years, passed amidst prosperity—even if one were not compelled to subtract the period of infancy, when man does not know himself, nor the intervals of sickness when one does not truly live, nor all that time of which we have always so much cause to repent—would they seem anything at all in the sight of eternity, toward which we advance

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with strides so swift? After a hundred and thirty years of life Jacob, led before the king of Egypt, spoke of the short duration of his laborious pilgrimage, which did not equal the days of his father Isaac nor of his grandfather Abraham. But the years of Abraham and of Isaac, which made those of Jacob seem to him so brief, vanish beside the lifetime of Shem, which, in turn, is effaced by that of Adam and of Noah. If time compared with time, and measure with measure, and term with term, are reduced to nothing, how will it be if we compare time with eternity, wherein there is neither measure nor term? Account, then, O Christians! as very brief, or rather account as pure nothingness, everything that comes to an end; for though we should multiply years beyond the reckoning of numbers, clearly all would be as nothing when we reached the fatal term!

“But, perhaps, at the point of death you will reckon as something that life of reputation, or that imagination of reliving in one’s family, which may seem to have been firmly established. Do you not perceive, my brethren, how vain, how short, and how fragile is still this second life, which our feebleness causes us to invent in order to cover up the horror of death? Sleep your sleep, great ones of the earth! Continue to dwell amid your dust! But, ah! if, in a few generations—what do I say?—if in a few *years*, after your death you should come back, forgotten men, in the midst of the world, you would make haste to return to your tombs in order not to see your name tarnished, your memory extinguished, and your anticipation defeated in your friends, in your creatures, and more than all else in your heirs and your children. Is *this* the fruit of the labor with which

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you have consumed yourself under the sun, heaping up treasures of eternal hate and anger for the just judgment of God? . . . Holy meditations, good works—these are the true treasures that you may send before you into future times; which will inspire you with strength and by whose means you may make firm your courage.”

If all sermons could have the qualities of these, no churches would be empty. It will be noted that even in a translation nearly all the force and beauty of the original are still felt; and this is true almost invariably in the case of great orations. With poems, on the other hand, there is always a notable loss, because with them so much depends upon the metrical value of certain definite words or collocations of words.

THOMAS H. HUXLEY

(From his lecture on “*The Physical Basis of Life.*”)

We have quoted another passage of this remarkable address in the last preceding part.

“In the wonderful story of the ‘*Peau de Chagrin*’ the hero becomes possessed of a magical wild ass’s skin which yields him the means of gratifying all his wishes. But its surface represents the duration of the proprietor’s life; and for every satisfied desire the skin shrinks in proportion to the intensity of fruition, until at length life and the last handbreadth of the *peau de chagrin* disappear with the gratification of the last wish. Balzac’s studies had led him over

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a wide range of thought and speculation, and his shadowing forth of physiological truth in this strange story may have been intentional. At any rate, the matter of life is a veritable *peau de chagrin*, and for every vital act it is somewhat smaller. All work implies waste, and the work of life results, directly or indirectly, in the waste of protoplasm. Every word uttered by a speaker costs him some physical loss; and, in the strictest sense, he burns that others may have light. . . . But, happily, the protoplasmic *peau de chagrin* differs from Balzac's in its capacity of being repaired and brought back to its full size after every exertion.

"For example, this present lecture, whatever its intellectual worth to you, has a certain physical value to me, which is, conceivably, expressible by the number of grains of protoplasm and other bodily substance wasted in maintaining my vital processes during its delivery. My *peau de chagrin* will be distinctly smaller at the end of the discourse than it was at the beginning. By and by I shall probably have recourse to the substance commonly called mutton for the purpose of stretching it back to its normal size. Now, this mutton was once the living protoplasm, more or less modified, of another animal—a sheep. . . . A singular inward laboratory which I possess will dissolve a certain portion of the modified protoplasm; the solution so formed will pass into my veins; and the subtle influences to which it will then be subjected will convert the dead protoplasm into living protoplasm and transubstantiate sheep into man.

"Nor is this all. If digestion were a thing to be trifled with, I might sup upon lobster, and the matter of life of the crustacean would undergo the same won-

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derful metamorphosis into humanity. And, were I to return to my own place by sea [this lecture was given in Edinburgh] and undergo shipwreck, the crustacean might, and probably would, return the compliment, and demonstrate our common nature by turning my protoplasm into living lobster. . . .

“Hence it appears to be a matter of no great moment what animal or what plant I lay under contribution for protoplasm, and the fact speaks volumes for the general identity of that substance in all living beings. . . . An animal cannot make protoplasm, but must take it ready-made from some other animal or some plant—the animal’s highest feat of constructive chemistry being to convert dead protoplasm into that living matter of life which is appropriate to itself. Therefore, in seeking for the origin of protoplasm we must eventually turn to the vegetable world. A fluid containing carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts, which offers such a Barmecide feast to the animal, is a table richly spread to multitudes of plants; and with a due supply of only such materials many a plant will not only maintain itself in vigor, but grow and multiply until it has increased a millionfold, or a million-millionfold, the quantity of protoplasm which it originally possessed; in this way building up the matter of life, to an indefinite extent, from the common matter of the universe.”

It would be, perhaps, impossible to find a more admirable example of what a scientific address to a miscellaneous audience should be—not only in clearness of statement, logical presentation, and vivacity of style, but also in the

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proper employment of illuminative humor, springing naturally out of the nature of the subject.

JOHN TYNDALL

(From his celebrated address before the British Association on "The Scientific Use of the Imagination," 1870.)

"This leads us to the gist of our present inquiry, which is this: Does life belong to what we call matter, or is it an independent principle *inserted into* matter at some suitable epoch, say when the physical conditions became such as to permit of the development of life? Let us put the question with all the reverence due to a faith and culture in which we all were cradled—a faith and culture, moreover, which are the undeniable historic antecedents of our present enlightenment. I say, let us put the question reverently, but let us also put it clearly and definitely.

"There are the strongest grounds for believing that during a certain period of its history the earth was not, nor was it fit to be, the theater of life. Whether this was a nebulous period or merely a molten period does not much matter, and if we revert to the nebulous condition it is because the probabilities are really on its side. Our question is this: Did creative energy pause until the nebulous matter had condensed, until the earth had been detached, until the solar fire had so far withdrawn from the earth's vicinity as to permit a crust to gather round the planet? Did it wait until the air was isolated, until the seas were formed, until evaporation, condensation, and the descent of

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rain had begun, until the eroding forces of the atmosphere had weathered and decomposed the molten rocks so as to form soils, until the sun's rays had become so tempered by distance and by waste as to be chemically fit for the decomposition necessary to vegetable life? Having waited through all those eons until the proper conditions had set in, did it then send the fiat forth, 'Let life be'? These questions define a hypothesis, not without its difficulties, but whose dignity is demonstrated by the nobleness of the men whom it has sustained.

"Modern scientific thought is called upon to decide between this hypothesis and another; and public thought generally will afterward be called upon to do the same. . . . But, however the convictions of individuals here and there may be influenced, the process must be slow and secular which commends the rival hypothesis of natural evolution to the public mind. For what are the core and essence of this hypothesis? Strip it naked, and you stand face to face with the notion that not alone the more ignoble forms of animalcular or animal life, not alone the nobler forms of the horse and the lion, not alone the exquisite and wonderful mechanism of the human body, but *the human mind itself*—emotion, intellect, will, and all their phenomena—were once latent in a fiery cloud! But the hypothesis would probably go even farther than this. Many who hold it would probably assent to the position that at the present moment all our philosophy, all our poetry, all our science, and all our art—Plato, Shakespeare, Newton, and Raphael—are potential in the fires of the sun!

"We long to learn something of our origin. If this evolution hypothesis be correct, even this unsatisfied

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yearning must have come to us across the ages which separate the unconscious primeval mist from the consciousness of to-day. I do not think that any holder of the evolution hypothesis will say that I overstate it or overstrain it in any way. I merely strip it of all vagueness and bring before you, unclothed and unvarnished, the notions by which it must stand or fall. . . .

“Why are these notions absurd, and why should sanity reject them? The law of relativity, of which we have previously spoken, may find its application here. These evolution notions are absurd, monstrous, and fit only for the intellectual gibbet, *in relation to* the ideas concerning matter which were drilled into us when young. . . . Supposing, instead of having the foregoing anthithesis of spirit and matter presented to our youthful minds, we had been taught to regard them as equally worthy and equally wonderful—to consider them, in fact, as two opposite faces of the self-same mystery. Supposing that in youth we had been impregnated with the notion of the poet Goethe instead of the notion of the poet Young, looking at matter not as brute matter, but as ‘the living garment of God’; do you not think that under these altered circumstances the law of relativity might have had an outcome different from its present one? Is it not probable that our repugnance to the idea of primeval union between spirit and matter might be considerably abated?

“Without this total revolution of the notions now prevalent the evolution hypothesis must stand condemned. But in many profoundly thoughtful minds such a revolution has already taken place. They degrade neither member of the mysterious duality

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referred to, but they exalt one of them from its abasement and repeal the divorce hitherto existing between both. In substance, if not in words, their position as regards the relation of spirit and matter is, 'What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.' And with regard to the ages of forgetfulness which lie between the unconscious life of the nebula and the conscious life of the earth it is, they would urge, but an extension of that forgetfulness which preceded the birth of us all."

This is a specimen of Tyndall's power of stripping scientific propositions of their technical dress and putting them imaginatively, but at the same time so perspicuously that the mind of the dullest of his hearers glowed with an intellectual sunrise. It is a method which always captivates, whatever the subject; but in a scientific address before a popular audience it is almost a *sine qua non*.

CICERO

(From the second pleading in his prosecution of the Roman proprætor Verres for misgovernment and robbery in Sicily.)

A model summation of facts, possessing almost the interest of a romance.

"I come now to what Verres himself calls his passion; what his friends call his disease, his madness; what the Sicilians call his rapine; what I am to call it I know not. I will state the whole affair to you, and do you consider it according to its own

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importance, and not the importance of its name. First, O judges, suffer me to make you acquainted with the facts about this conduct of his, and then, perhaps, you will not be puzzled by what name to call it. I say that in all Sicily, in all that wealthy and ancient province, in all that number of towns and families of such exceeding riches, there was no silver vessel, no Corinthian or Delian plate, no jewel or pearl, nothing made of gold or ivory, no statue of marble or brass or ivory, no picture, whether painted or embroidered, that he did not seek out, that he did not inspect, that, if he liked it, he did not take away.

"I seem to be making a very extensive charge; listen now to the manner in which I make it. For I am not embracing everything in one charge for the sake of making an impression or of exaggerating his guilt. When I say that he left nothing whatever of the sort in the whole province, know that I am speaking according to the strict meaning of the words, and not in the spirit of an accuser. . . .

"Where shall I begin rather than with that city which was above all others in your affection, and which was your chosen place of enjoyment; or with that class of men rather than with your flatterers? [This was addressed direct to Verres himself, a favorite method with Cicero in his prosecutions.] For by what means will it be more easily seen how you behaved among those who hate you, who accuse you, who will not let you rest, than by proving how, in the most infamous manner, you plundered among the Mamertines, who are your friends?

"Caius Heius is a Mamertine, the most accomplished man in every point of view in all that city—all men will easily grant me this who have ever been at

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Messana. His house is the very best in all Messana; the most thoroughly known, most constantly open, most especially hospitable to all our fellow-citizens. That house, before the arrival of Verres, was so splendidly adorned as to be an ornament even to that city. There was in the house of Heius a private chapel of great sacredness, handed down to him from his ancestors; very ancient, in which he had four very beautiful statues, made with the greatest skill and of very high character; calculated not only to delight Verres, that clever and accomplished man, but even any one of us, whom he calls 'the mob.' One was a statue of Cupid, in marble, a work of Praxiteles—for, in truth, while I have been inquiring into that man's conduct I have learned the names of the workmen—it was the same workman, as I imagine, who made that celebrated Cupid, of the same figure as this, which is at Thespiæ, and on account of which people go to see Thespiæ, for there is no other reason for going to see it; and that great man, Lucius Mummius, when he carried away from that town the statues of the Muses which are now before the temple of Good Fortune, and the other statues which were not consecrated, did not touch this marble Cupid because it had been consecrated.

"But, to return to that private chapel—there was this statue which I am speaking of, of Cupid, made of marble. On the other side there was a Hercules, beautifully made of brass; that was said to be the work of Myron, as I believe—and it undoubtedly was so. Also, before those gods there were little altars, which might indicate to any one the holiness of the chapel. There were besides two brazen statues, of no very great size, but of marvelous beauty, in the

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dress and robes of virgins, which, with uplifted hands, were supporting some sacred vessels that were placed on their heads, after the fashion of the Athenian virgins. They were called the Canephoræ, but their maker was—who?—who was he?—thank you, you are quite right, they called him Polycletus.

“Whenever any one of our citizens went to Messana, he used to go and see those statues. They were open every day for people to go to see them. The house was not more an ornament to its master than it was to the city. . . . All these statues which I have mentioned, O judges, Verres took away from Heius, out of his private chapel. He left, I say, not one of these things, nor anything else, except one old wooden figure—‘Good Fortune,’ as I believe—that, forsooth, he did not choose to have in his house!”

This entire oration should be read by every one who wishes to see how such a master as Cicero marshaled his facts, dumfounded the guilty whom he accused, and enchanted every hearer with the magic of his style, whose very diffuseness was, in his hands, an added charm.

DEMOSTHENES

(From his “Oration on the Crown,” called “the greatest speech of the greatest orator in the world.”)

The delivery of this oration was the culmination of a long struggle between Demosthenes and his rival Æschines. The question immediately at issue was whether Demosthenes was entitled to receive the “crown” which Ctesiphon had proposed that the people of Athens should bestow upon him in recognition of his public services. The orator seized the occasion to explain

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and defend his course, and to demonstrate the patriotism of his motives, at the same time denouncing Æschines. The oration is very long, and no extracts can give an adequate idea of its power.

“I begin, men of Athens, by praying to every god and goddess that the same good-will which I have ever cherished toward the commonwealth and all of you may be requited to me on the present trial. I pray, likewise—and this specially concerns yourselves, your religion, and your honor—that the gods may put it into your minds not to take counsel of my opponent touching the manner in which I am to be heard—that would indeed be cruel! but of the laws and of your oath; wherein, besides the other obligations, it is prescribed that you shall hear both sides alike. This means not only that you must pass no precondemnation, not only that you must extend your good-will equally to both, but also that you must allow the parties to adopt such order and course of defense as they severally choose and prefer.

“Many advantages hath Æschines over me on this trial; and two especially, men of Athens. First, my risk in the contest is not the same. It is assuredly not the same for me to forfeit your regard as for my adversary not to succeed in his indictment. To me—but I will say nothing untoward at the outset of my address. The prosecution, however, is *play* to him. My second disadvantage is the natural disposition of mankind to take pleasure in hearing invective and accusation, and to be annoyed by those who praise themselves. To Æschines is assigned the part which gives pleasure; that which is, I may fairly

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say, offensive to all is left for me. And if, to escape from this, I make no mention of what I have done, I shall appear to be without defense against his charges, without proof of my claims to honor; whereas, if I proceed to give an account of my conduct and measures, I shall be forced to speak frequently of myself. I will endeavor, then, to do so with all becoming modesty—what I am driven to by the necessity of the case will be fairly chargeable to my opponent, who has instituted such a prosecution. . . .

“The mention of this man’s treasonable acts brings me to the part which I have myself taken in opposition to him. It is fair that you should hear my account of it, for many reasons; but chiefly, men of Athens, because it would be a shame, when I have undergone the toil of exertions on your behalf, that you should not endure the bare recital of them. When I saw that the Thebans, and I may add the Athenians, were so led away by Philip’s partisans and the corrupt men of either state as to disregard and to take no precaution against a danger which menaced both and required the utmost precaution—I mean the suffering of Philip’s power to increase—and that they were readily disposed to enmity and strife with one another, I was constantly watchful to prevent it; not only because in my own judgment I deemed such vigilance expedient, but because I knew that Aristophon and Eubulus had, all along, desired to bring about that union, and, whilst they were frequently in opposition about other matters, were always agreed upon this. Men whom, in their lifetime—you reptile—you pestered with flattery know not that you are accusing them in their graves—for

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the Theban policy that you reproach me with is a charge less affecting me than them, who approved that alliance before I did. . . .

"A better citizen have I been than you in respect of the matters of which I am speaking, inasmuch as I gave myself up to what seemed for the general good, not shrinking from any personal danger nor taking thought of any; whilst you neither suggested better measures, for then mine would not have been adopted, nor lent any aid in the execution of mine. Exactly what the basest person and worst enemy of the state would do *you* are found to have done, after the event; and so, at one and the same time, Aristratus in Naxos and Aristolaus in Thasos, the deadly foes of our state, are bringing to trial the friends of Athens, and Æsthenes at Athens is accusing Demosthenes!

"Surely the man who waited to found his reputation upon the misfortunes of the Greeks deserves rather to perish than to be heard as the accuser of another; nor is it possible that one who has profited by the same conjunctures as the enemies of the commonwealth can be a well-wisher to his country. You exhibit yourself by your life and conduct, by your political action, and even your inaction. Is anything going on that appears good for the people? Æschines is mute! Has anything untoward happened, or amiss?—forth comes Æschines just as fractures and sprains are put in motion when the body is attacked with disease. . . .

"Had I attempted to say, O men of Athens, that I had instructed you in sentiments worthy of your ancestors, there is not a man who would not justly rebuke me. What I declare is that such principles

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are your own. I show that before my time such was the spirit of the commonwealth, though certainly in the execution of particular measures I claim a share also for myself. The prosecutor, arraigning the whole proceedings and embittering you against me as the cause of our alarms and dangers, in his eagerness to deprive me of honor for the moment, robs you of the eulogies that should endure forever. For should you, under a disbelief in the wisdom of my policy, convict the defendant, you will appear to have done wrong not to have accepted what befell you by the cruelty of fortune. But never, *never* can you have done wrong, O Athenians, in undertaking the battle for the freedom and safety of all! I swear it by your forefathers—those that met the peril at Marathon, those that took the field at Platea, those in the sea-fight at Salamis, those who were at Artemisium, and many other brave men who repose in the public monuments; *all* of whom, alike, the country buried, Æschines, and not merely the successful or the victorious. And justly! For the *duty* of brave men was performed by all; their *fortune* was such as the Deity assigned.”

An English translation of the whole of this great oration may be found in the Bohn Library series of classics. It should be studied by everybody who aspires to public speaking; but, for its full comprehension, a fair knowledge of Greek history, and the ability vividly to represent to the imagination the historic past, are requisite. The critical judgment of more than twenty centuries has placed this speech at the apex of

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oratorical achievement. "Unapproachable forever," declared Lord Brougham.

SOCRATES

(From his "Apologia," pronounced when the Athenians condemned him to death, for no other apparent reason than their resentment of his persistent questions and implied rebukes.)

"It would be a strange act indeed on my part, O men of Athens, after remaining in whatever post I was stationed by the leaders whom you appointed over me, at Potidæa, Amphipolis, and Delium, and facing death like any other man, if, now that I am, as I think and believe, under orders from the God to pass my life in the pursuit of wisdom and in examining myself and others—if now, I say, through fear of death or other evil, I should desert my post. . . .

"Wherefore, O men of Athens, I am far from defending myself for my own sake, as might be expected—but for your sake I do it, lest in condemning me you err by rejecting the gift which God offers you. For if you kill me you will not readily find another such as I, who am, as it were—although the comparison may sound somewhat ridiculous—fastened upon the state by God, like some gadfly upon a powerful, high-bred steed, who has become sluggish by reason of his very size, and needs to be aroused. Such a man, citizens, you will not easily find again; and if you take my advice you will spare me. But perhaps being irritated, as sleepy persons are when suddenly aroused, you may strike out at me and, persuaded by Anytus, hastily put me to death, and then slumber tranquilly on for the rest of your days;

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unless, indeed, God should, in his care for you, send some one else to rouse you. And that I am such a gift of God to the state you can see from this my conduct, for it is not in the ordinary course of human nature that I should have been thus neglectful of my own affairs, and should have suffered my household interests to be uncared for, these many years, while I was continually busying myself with your interests, going about to each one of you individually, like a father or an elder brother, and trying to persuade you to take thought for virtue." . . .

The decree of death having been pronounced, Socrates resumed his address.

"It is not much time, O men of Athens, that you will gain by shortening my life, in return for the evil name and the charge of having put to death Socrates, a wise man, which those who wish to speak ill of the city will fasten upon you; for those who wish to upbraid you will call me wise even though I be not so. Now, if you had waited but for a little while, what you wish would have happened in the natural course of events, for you see my time of life, how far on in years I am, how near to death. You probably think, O citizens, that I have been convicted for the lack of such arguments as might have persuaded you if I had thought it right to do or to say every manner of thing in order to escape this sentence. Far from it! I have been convicted by a lack, not of arguments, but of audacity and of shamelessness and of willingness to say such things as you would have liked to hear; because I would not weep and lament, and do and say many other things to which indeed you are

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accustomed in others, but which, as I have told you, would be unworthy of me. . . . But I suspect, citizens, that the difficulty is not in escaping death, but much rather in escaping evil, for this runs faster than death. Now I, being slow and old, am overtaken by death, the slower; and my accusers, being swift and skilful, by evil, the swifter of the two. And now I go away, condemned by you, to receive the penalty of death; but they go condemned by truth to receive the penalty of wickedness and wrong. I must abide by my sentence; they by theirs. These things, peradventure, were destined to be, and I believe they are for the best. . . .

“And now let us reason, and we shall see what great hope there is that death is a good. . . . What would not any of you give to converse with Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? I, at least, would gladly die many times, if this be true; for, to my thinking, that state of being would be wonderful indeed if in it I might have the chance of meeting with Palamedes and Ajax, the son of Telamon, and other heroes of the olden time who died through unrighteous judgment. To compare my own suffering with theirs were, methinks, no unpleasing task; but best of all would it be to examine and question there, as I have done here, and discover who is really wise and who thinks himself so, but is not. What, O judges, would a man not give to question him who led the great army against Troy, or Ulysses, or Sisyphus, or the thousand others, both men and women, whom one might mention? To dwell and converse with them and to question them would indeed be happiness unspeakable! For assuredly, in that world, at all events, they do not put you to

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death for doing this; and not only in other things are they far happier than we here below, but, if what is said be true, they are there immortal for the rest of time. But you, too, O judges, it behooves to be of good hope about death, and to believe that this, at least, is true—there can no evil befall a good man, whether he be alive or dead, nor are his affairs uncared for by the gods.”

This speech, reported by Plato, may rank with the masterpiece of Demosthenes. It should be studied, and read in full. Excellent English translations exist.

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